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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

SEPARATE REALITIES:
NATIVE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

by

MARIE ARLETTE SUZANNE BARRETTE ©

A thesis submitted to
The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
MASTER OF EDUCATION
in
INTERNATIONAL/INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES

Edmonton, Alberta
Spring, 1995

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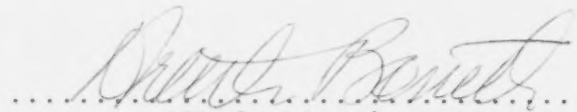

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November 25th, 1994

There is a longing in the heart of my people to reach out and grasp that which is needed for our survival. There is a longing among the young of my nation to secure for themselves and their people the skills that will provide them with a sense of worth and purpose. They will be our new warriors. Their training will be much longer and more demanding than it was in the olden days. The long years of study will demand more determination, separation from home and family will demand endurance. But they will emerge with their hand held forward to grasp the place in society that is rightfully theirs.

The Late Chief Dan George

(From a poster displayed in the Education Office)

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis titled **SEPARATE REALITIES: NATIVE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION,** submitted by **MARIE ARLETTE SUZANNE BARRETTE** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of **MASTER OF EDUCATION in INTERNATIONAL/INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION.**

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DEDICATION

To the memory of my grandparents Ovila and Elmire Mailly, and to my parents Charles-Eugene and Marie-Rose Barrette who have seeded the desire to learn and encouraged it to grow.

To my Native Elders and friends who have guided and taught me so patiently the way "home".

ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the perceptions of the socio-economic relationship of knowledge and power created by the attainment of post-secondary education among First Nations peoples in Northern Alberta.

The concept of community-based research is rooted in the principle of self-determination. It is descriptive research which generates answers from within the Indian community, in this case a specific Band, determining what post-secondary education priorities have been set and how they relate to individuals, Band and community interests.

Using the developmental research approach to describe the post-secondary educational achievements from the inside has the advantage of assessing inductively the situation not as a problem nor a solution but as an inquiry of what is: to describe accurately the situation; to discover and identify patterns, directions, and rates of growth or change over time while accounting for variations; expressing hypotheses and theories related to the findings; and suggesting options or alternatives if required.

The research provides a better understanding of the socio-economic ramifications of Post-secondary Native education and of their implications within a Northern community. A field of research quite unexplored yet.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work represents the culmination of nine years of experience in the field of Education: as a student and as an educator.

Consequently it is also a melting contribution of all the people who crossed paths with me during that same period: colleagues, teachers, students, community members, and friends. Too many to list here, but they know who they are.

Individually, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the following people:

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DEFINITION OF TERMINOLOGY

The following definitions are provided for the benefits of the readers who might not be familiar with certain terms, acronyms, or policies.

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL COLLEGE - LESSER SLAVE LAKE (A.V.C.):

An adult Education institution which delivers programs in academic upgrading, trades and professional programs, University and College Entrance Preparation (U.C.E.P.), and University Transfer (2 yrs) through 21 Campuses in Northern Alberta. It has the distinction of having the largest Native student body in Alberta.

BAND:

Legal entity designated under the Indian Act of Canada.

BAND MEMBER:

A person whose name appears on a Band List or is entitled to have his name on a Band List.

BILL C-31:

Legal change made to the Indian Act in 1986 relative to the re-instatement of Indian status to women who had married Non-native men and had thereby been removed from the Band list along with the children born within that union. Ending of the union did not restore status. After Bill C-31 was passed, application had to be made

for Indian status by each individual concerned to the Department of Indian Affairs Northern Development (D.I.A.N.D.). Many Indian Bands refuse to accept re-instated C-31's onto their Reserves or to give them access to their resources, funding, or participation in the affairs of their Bands. Consequently, D.I.A.N.D. had to administer services to them directly and as such includes them in their statistics. Bill C-31 continues to be a serious point of contention politically, economically, and socially.

COMMUNITY:

Refers to the physical location of the Reserve and the surrounding hamlet.

DEPT.OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT (D.I.A.N.D.)

Federal agency administrating the government policies applicable to Bands, Reserves, and Indians subject to the Indian Act.

FIRST NATIONS:

Term used by the Assembly of First Nations to refer to aboriginal peoples of Canada. The term reflects the original inhabitants occupational rights to the land.

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (I.D #**):

Form of municipal government administrating services to the hamlet. The specific number is left out to protect anonymity of the location.

INDIAN:

Federal government term referring to a person who pursuant to the Indian Act is registered as an Indian or is entitled to be registered as an Indian.

PATCHAWANSIS BAND:

Term used here to preserve the anonymity of the actual group and location where the research was conducted.

NATIVE:

Term generically applied to Indians, Metis, Aboriginal People, Inuit, Bill C-31, Status Indians and Non-status, to Indigenous Peoples and First Nations Peoples. For the purposes of education and social conditions, Native Peoples face similar issues. However, this is not true when applied to any area of legal categorizations or to constitutional matters.

OPPORTUNITY CORPS PROGRAM (O.C.P.):

Provincially sponsored occupational training programs to prepare people towards apprenticeship exams in certain trades (mostly carpentry).

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION:

Trades and professional training gained from College and/or University and preparation programs such as the University and College Entrance Program (U.C.E.P.).

RESERVE:

Lands held by Her Majesty for the use and benefit of the Band for which they are set apart, and subject under the Indian Act to the terms of a Treaty.

SELF-GOVERNMENT/SELF-DETERMINATION:

Inherent right to govern and make decisions affecting life and affairs on the Band's lands and with the resources therein; with all the duties and responsibilities of governing bodies. In this research the preferred term used by the Patchawansis Band is self-determination in accordance with the Assembly of First Nations.

TREATY RIGHTS:

Rights accrued to the Native Peoples as a result of Treaties negotiated between themselves and the British Crown or the Government of Canada. Treaty 8 is applicable to this study.

WASP :

Acronym for White Anglo Speaking Protestant, used to refer to the work ethic centered on achievement and advancement.

WHITES:

Generic term to refer to the non-Native population which constitute a society whose members are most represented in the institution of schooling and other

social or governmental agencies active within the Native community.

CHAPTER 1

Casual observations over a period of time led to my interest in researching the background facts related to Post-secondary education for First Nations Peoples of Canada. As an adult educator in a northern community in Alberta, Canada; I pondered the nature of the Native Educational Policy and its implications for the community, the Band, and the individuals within these designators.

Personal Background and Experience of Researcher

My previous experiences have decidedly influenced my sympathies towards self-determination and my distrust of official data as the source of Truth. Being a member of a cultural minority in Alberta and in Ontario provided the grounding for that. I was a part of the cultural majority in Quebec during the years of the "Revolution Tranquile" of the late 60's and I was personally and politically affected by the Liberation movement and the political emergence and entrenchment of the separatism in the 70's. Consequently, I have come to realize the importance of cultural identity and autonomy within the Canadian mosaic.

Living and working for seven years among First Nations Peoples demystified the "Reserve" system for me as the realities of isolation and social and economic issues

penetrated through the enthusiasm of my desire to help others. As reality set in my attitudes changed. I learned much more than I had anticipated. Dedicated people took the time to show me "behind the scenes" into the causes of the symptoms of economic and social depression and into the strength, hope and cultural resources available to First Nations Peoples.

Witnessing the Little Buffalo blockade (1987)[1] and the Army rolling in towards Oka (1990)[2] in the 80's and 90's, and then watching and reading the medias biased and/or limited reports added to what I perceived as discrepancies between the lived and perceived realities of the power and knowledge issues pervading First Nations' slanted portrayal in Canadian society.

In discussions with my own family members, friends and colleagues, I realized that many carried negative views towards First Nations peoples. As an individual and an educator how could I give them a more realistic view of what was happening, and how could I help to erase their racial

---

[1] The Lubicon Band in Little Buffalo, Northern Alberta blocked the roads leading to lands which were part of their land claims. The government had granted logging rights to a foreign logging company. This meant resources were harvested from contested lands.

[2] Oka a small community 60 KM north west of Montreal, Quebec where Kanasatake Mohawks co-habited with non-native neighbours until land dispute turned the area into an armed camp. Finally, the army was called in by the government to face-off with the Mohawk Warriors in a highly tensed situation, which has still not been resolved entirely.

pre-judgement? I felt that I could become a part of the process of enlightenment by producing knowledge and by disseminating it in order to:

1. Provide a different perspective of the prevailing view of native education, post-secondary "failure" implied by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (D.I.A.N.D.).
2. Raise questions which would hopefully encourage other scholars to pursue research aimed at demystifying Indian education.

Background Information

One community in which I was a teacher had definite aspects and potential for socio-economic change. However, in my eyes, the local socio-economic structure dominated by "whites" had not changed during the five year interval since my initial visit. I began to wonder about the purpose of education in this community. In particular I was interested in learning about the effects of Patchawansis Band Members' post-secondary education since frequently this education had to be gained away from the community and at great financial cost.

First Observation: September 86 to August 87

1) The community included a mix of Natives (Band Members, Status and Non-Status Indians, Metis) and a White minority made-up of transient teachers, Government employees (R.C.M.P., Forestry), Clergy, Medical and The Bay staff. A few Whites had intermarried and were now operating some service and trades businesses with the Metis.

2) Participation at the local campus of the Alberta Vocational College was high as all courses had met their recruitment quotas. Furthermore, the Occupational Corps Program (O.C.P.) had a full contingent of trade apprentices as well.

3) All programs had application for enrolment rates surpassing the enrolment limits.

4) Waiting lists had been established to priorize future enrolments.

5) Six members of the Community Education Committee represented the various segments of the population to the exception of the "Whites" who, at the time, were not a significant participating group in the education enterprise.

6) The Community Education Committee requested programs relevant to the current and anticipated employment needs of the community. Their goal was to develop local expertise to meet employment and (para) professional

needs. They requested to this end: Registered Nursing Assistant training, Trades, and Secretarial/Computer training as well as continuous upgrading and literacy programs.

The employment focus was on the building and staffing of the local hospital and housing, the future Alberta Vocational College Campus and oil field expansion.

7) The Patchawansis Band had an education policy, a manager and an organized Education authority, and sponsored many Band Members either locally (if training was available) or outside the community.

8) Spouses of the non-Native transients were employed mostly by the local schools and government agencies as their educational levels and employment experiences often surpassed the local expertise.

Second Observation: September 90 to July 91

I returned to the same community five years later and noticed that participation in the local Adult Education Program had doubled as extra class rooms and staff had been added. However, the waiting lists were longer and the demand was still growing, while the funding for the construction of the new Campus was still "pending". There was no apprenticeship or secretarial/business training offered at

that time as all resources had been allocated to the Upgrading Program which had been expanded.

The Occupational Corps Program had been renamed the Northern Alberta Job Corps and continued training apprentices. The Hospital had been in operation for a year and had hired locally trained Registered Nursing Assistants; however, many had left the community. Secretarial graduates had been hired more frequently and one had established her own secretarial and book keeping business.

The Band Education Authority had continued to expand its funding and the Patchawansis Band was becoming the main employer for Band members in professional, trades, para-professional and support positions.

New facilities had opened: a motel, a government building, and a new school. Self-determination and Bill C-31 added to the pressing political and economic concerns for the Patchawansis Band whose membership was dramatically increased as a result of the changes made to the Indian Act **(Table 1 next page)**.

TABLE I

POPULATION	CODES	01	02	03	04	05	06
31/12/79 - 1656		707	0	26	0	474	449
31/12/84 - 2053		946	12	23	1	573	498
31/12/89 - 3085		1204	15	0	6	434	1426
08/12/93 - 4127		1512	14	315	8	195	2103

RESIDENCE CODES:
01 - ON A RESERVE SET ASIDE FOR OWN BAND
02 - ON A RESERVE SET ASIDE FOR ANOTHER BAND
03 - ON CROWN LAND IN A COMMUNITY ADMINISTERED BY OWN BAND
04 - ON CROWN LAND IN A COMMUNITY ADMINISTERED BY ANOTHER BAND
05 - ON CROWN LAND IN A COMMUNITY NOT ADMINISTERED BY ANY SPECIFIC BAND
06 - OFF RESERVE

(D.I.A.N.D.; 1979, 1984, 1989, 1993)

Table 1: Membership/Population Increase 1979 - 1993.

Some additional socio-economic factors which have been officially reported include the following:

1. This specific Patchawansis Band membership/population **(Table 1)** has increased considerably over the last fourteen years.
2. According to national data referring to all Indian Post-secondary Education Enrolment:

a. Indian rates of enrolment are higher in non-university post-secondary programs than in university programs.

b. For Indians reaching university the completion rate is about half of the non-Indian rates of 50%.

c. Indians with a university degree show higher median incomes and labour force activity rates compared to Indians with a high school diploma.

d. Economic gains from a degree are higher for Indians than non-Indians.

e. Indian university/college graduates will become role models for many in the next generation.

f. The importance of post-secondary education is well recognized both by Native leaders and government. There is significant potential to post-secondary education to bring change in the community. (D.I.A.N.D.,1990)

This report does not take into account provincial and regional disparities which would reveal different results. Provinces with a longer history of Native Education and regions where the gaps between native and non-native communities have been reduced would probably have higher rates of post-secondary education than isolated communities. These specifics were not part of the report.

There is an inclination towards change, economic gain, and success according to the standards of the mainstream society in these reportings. The underlying expectation of education (academic knowledge) as being a primary factor of leadership in not a Native concept. In spite of colonialism

being officially a past policy, it seems to still exist under the umbrella of D.I.A.N.D. ...

3. In 1992-93, the Patchawansis Band had 52 University/Professional students and 7 U.C.E.P. students according to D.I.A.N.D. (1993) records.

4. According to Statistics Canada (1991) there was no University Graduates living on the Reserve in spite of a number of people having been recorded as enrolled in University programs in the previous Census and in spite of years of post-secondary sponsorship. Keeping in mind that those who would have graduated may not have been living on the reserve and that they would have been shown in the census as a members of another community (eg. Edmonton) this piece of information is what led to thinking about the research question.

Statement of the Research Question

Given that many Native students have enrolled in post-secondary education, and taking into account the large amounts of money that have been spent on this endeavour, yet still there are no university graduates one might ask what happened over the years? What can be said about the post-secondary education of Band members?

Literature Search of Post - Secondary Native Education

In providing an overview of the existing literature and available research studies pertaining to the post-secondary education of Natives there was some difficulty in selecting what materials should be considered.

I did not adhere to a specific theory at that time (March 1994), so I aimed at providing a general overview of the existing research in order to establish the parameter for my research of the Post-secondary education influence in a Northern Native community.

I consulted **Vol.1, Reference Encyclopedia of the American Indian** (Klein, 1986), **Indians of North America** (Haas, 1983), **Guide to Research on North American Indians** (Hirschfelder, Gloyne-Byler, Dorris, 1983) and discovered that the research was classified as cultural, economic conditions, education, cultural assimilation, economic and social aspects, urban life, religion, arts and literature. In some cases the subdivisions were made around the regions (Southwest, Plateau, Alaska, etc.). These bibliographies were American and did not include Canadian content. I retained the classifications with the exception of religion and arts and literature.

In looking for a Canadian bibliographies I discovered **Indians of Canada: A Bibliography (Keyano College, 1992).** It provided listings of Canadian books and government documents

under such topics as Band membership, community development, education, employment, financial affairs, government relations, legal status and law, population, Plains Indians, race relations, Reserves, self-government, social conditions, statistics, treatment of Indians, and women.

This Bibliography provided much understanding of the political, social and economic context of the present situation and issues surrounding the question of post-secondary education of Native people. Again, the material was selectively appraised: researches related to specific periods or aspects of our Canadian history were eliminated as were the Inuit related items. Many documents were outdated statistically (prior to 1979). However, the Bibliography suggested new classifications and provided references to books and government documents sources which were leading to new information.

Indians, Metis and Inuit of Canada in Theses and Dissertations: 1892 - 1987 (Dyer, 1989) contains three thousand one hundere and sixty-two (3162) titles which are related to Native peoples of Canada or make references at least a paragraph long about them. The works have been written by scholars from Canada, the United States, and Europe principally. The manuscripts are grouped under the University at which the degrees were granted. The titles and general classification of the orientation are indicated:

Anthropology, Sociology, Arts and such. Overall this bibliography did not really prove useful but it provided an overview of the extent of the research done in the last hundered years.

I elected not to use the term "Indian" as I had realized that it most often led to research/papers relevant to India and its population either at home or abroad. Also the term has not been "politically correct" for some time in Canada and it seemed appropriate that recent research would have avoided the term.

The term "First Nations" had also been considered but as it is of more recent coinage the term has not been accepted universally by all Native peoples in Canada; therefore, I used the more widely recognized "Native" descriptor. It was indeed effective in eliminating the irrelevant materials and in restricting numbers. I elected to use a fairly broad spectrum for my literature search and to narrow it down subsequently by means of sub-classifications.

The **Educational Research Information Centre (ERIC 1982-12/93)** database which lists research, papers and articles. Using broad terms generated generic records:

Native (5713),

Education (274526),

Economic (15666),

Development (105524),

Post-secondary (456),

University (36974),

Community Education (40059),

Changes (16946),

Knowledge (21693),

Self-government (57)

Power (9658).

These lead to sub-combinations such as:

Native Education (12),

Native Economic Development (0),

Native Education and Economic Development (2),

Post-secondary Native Education (0),

University Native Education (0),

Education for Self-government (1),

Education and Economic Self-Reliance (2),

Community Education and Changes (106),

Native Community Education and Changes (0),

Power and Knowledge (595),

Native Power and Knowledge (10).

The field having been narrowed to such small numbers I proceeded to examine the abstracts. Many selections pertained to Native/Aboriginal groups outside of North America so I did not include them in this survey. My goal was primarily to explore the Canadian context or if need be

the North American one in which it is educationally, economically and politically located.

Many of the remaining abstracts related to the past experience of Native education with an emphasis on the traumas and failures during the historical period ending in the '70s as exemplified by Bull (1990) who explored the lived experiences of the residential schools. Others pointed to the future of Native education controlled by Natives and incorporating Native values and cultural elements (Atleo, 1991; Haig-Brown, 1992; Urion, 1991).

In respect to Education and Self-Determination (Jojola and Agoyo, 1992) the paper related to the American (U.S.A.) federal policy of "encouraging" economic development by the American Indian Tribes under The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. The research emphasizes job training and restructuration of tribal government in a New Mexico Reservation as necessary steps towards economic self-sustainment. "Job-training" in "trades" is advocated at the expense of higher education. The stereotype of Native people as a "labour force" is implied.

The topic of Community Education points at its leadership, its philosophy, various trends, partnerships examples and role definitions (Zemlo, 1989; Burkholder, 1987; Liebertz, 1983). The economic impacts of adult education are studied in relation to the unemployed of

rural areas (Westwood and Thomas, 1991; White and Merrifield, 1990). Education is linked closely to the development theory in which people are seen as resources to be cultivated through a systematic educational process instituted by the mainstream society to enforce its ideology. This became a recurring theme in the literature related to native education reflecting the colonialism which First Nations Peoples are attempting to redress by pursuing self-determination.

One publication referred extensively to the life-long learning needs, preparing the climate for public education in the upcoming decades and the role of the Community College in continuing education, basic education, literacy programs in Northern Alberta (Burkholder, 1987).

Language issues were most often linked to the power and knowledge relationship (Haig-Brown, 1992; McLaughlin, 1989). Post-Secondary Education addressed descriptions of various colleges and university training for Native people; articles expressed support for various approaches, for aspects of teacher training, for special education programs, for career specialization, for native language programs or for funding needs of such. Socio-economic factors and cognitive abilities were often provided as the focus of failure to complete education programs.

Secondly, I consulted the **University Microfilms** - MTS Dissertation Abstracts. I came up with 21 academic (theses and dissertation) titles related to highschool and post-secondary native education. All were American but one (1) was based in Alberta: Amenu-Tekaa (1988) looked at the perceptions of community participation in education by providing a case study from a North-Central Alberta Reserve. The emphasis however was on the administration and the ethnic and racial relations and perception differentials explaining the discrepancies between cultural groups.

The other works were related to the aims of education towards employability, transition, literacy, special education needs and dropout and retention factors in high-school, college and university programs for American Indians (U.S.A.). These reported findings corroborated previous theories and the outsiders' views of what the problems are of educating native learners. They seem to point an accusing finger towards the learners and to emphasize the length to which the dominant society has gone to "give them a chance" in education. The dominant partner controls and regulates the situation. The colonial value system filters through.

One work attracted my attention: Rangasamy (1992) follow-up study (5 years) of post-high-school students into employability and transition to the urban setting from the Apache Reservation special and regular education students.

From this part of the review I realized the importance of the perceptions guiding action and of following upon the immediate results to assess impact and assimilation. This was the only follow-up research I came across.

Recent (ERIC 1982-12/93) research into the literature on Relationship Between Power and Knowledge, has been mostly designed around the language issue in education of Aboriginal children, the political aspects of bilingual education in transforming the leadership in Navaho-controlled schools (McLaughlin, 1989), and the power struggle over control in Native Adult education in British Columbia (Haig-Brown, 1992).

Because of the geographical location of the Patchawansis Band, I wanted to explore the Northern Alberta situation more closely. **The Arctic Science and Technology Information System** (1986) is a microfiche and reference system located in the Circumpolar Institute. It provided information on the Training and Employment of Northern Canadians by private corporations and government programs. The classification were: Training for Employment, Employment Opportunities, Rotation and Commuting, Labour Mobility and Relocation. The works were oriented towards Northern Canadians as vocational and labour workers with an emphasis on the Arctic population (Inuit), then on Whites, and then on Natives. The aims were to meet the needs of the economy

rather than the local/individual needs. Oil field, mining, and forestry were the employment targets; there is no mention of local development, sustainable development, or cultural preservation. Rather the plans aim at developing a uniform labour force which would be highly mobile and adaptable to the exploitation of natural resources as directed by large corporations who would provide the direction and supervision of the local workers who at best can rise to lower supervision levels.

Government documents published by **federal and provincial** agencies such as Canada Statistics and Demographics, the Department of Indian Affairs, the Northern Alberta Development Council, and the Improvement District uses different procedures, criteria, and sometimes even different definitions to record, evaluate and produce statistics and data. The result was a frustrating one for me: there is plenty of data available but it is often incompatible, confusing, and even contradictory as timelines will also vary and overlap.

What became evident is the lack of holistic documentation available in terms of the socio-economic focus of the knowledge and power relationship created by the attainment of post-secondary education within the Native communities in Canada. This research will attempt to bridge this gap.

Again, the development theory seems to have been emphasized in Native Education and the implied relationships of knowledge and power might be found in the "white" society and might not be the case for First Nations communities. This would lead one to ask more questions about what makes this happen, and which may mean that the colonial relationship remains strong (at least for now) in spite of past individual achievements by First Nations Peoples.

Furthermore, these researchers were from the "outside". Their research pointed to perceived "problems" as seen from the dominant culture. Natives are seen as outsiders who have to change to integrate the values of the white society. Their "failure" is their problem. They are blamed for their lack of success in the production oriented mainstream Canadian society. Once more they are excluded from the process, studied as objects, silenced and the findings are used against them to justify policies and practices. This is the demystification that is needed to create awareness, and perhaps bring about action which will bridge the gulf between the two cultures.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this community-based research is to provide an emic (knowledge from within) understanding of the

application and results of the Patchawansis Band Post-secondary Education Policy.

Theory

A theory is a set of concepts, plus their interrelationships that taken collectively attempt to explain a given phenomena. It provides a means of making sense of the world or of a particular class of phenomena (Palys, 1992:45, 240-47).

The theory formulation will result from the exploration and description of specific characteristics which explain the present situation. While it is possible to present various and rival plausible explanations, the implications of the theory will be relational to the research and to the structure of the social situation in which information is gathered.

The following questions guided the investigation and procedures:

1. WHAT IS THE PATCHAWANSIS BAND'S POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION POLICY?
2. WHAT WERE ITS AIMS OVER THE LAST 14 YEARS? AND HAVE THEY CHANGED?
3. WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BAND MEMBERS SELECTED FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION?

4. WHAT POST-SECONDARY TRAININGS ARE SOUGHT AND WHERE ARE THEY OFFERED?
5. DOES KNOWLEDGE (EDUCATION) INCREASE THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC POWER OF THE PARTICIPANTS, IN THE PATCHAWANSIS BAND AND/OR IN THE COMMUNITY? IF SO, HOW?
6. WHAT HAPPENS TO THE PEOPLE WHO FINISH THEIR POST - SECONDARY EDUCATION?
7. WHAT ARE THE ISSUES ARISING FROM THE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION EXPERIENCE?

CHAPTER 2

DISCUSSION OF THE METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

In this chapter the methodologies for conducting research are discussed because they are what guided my decisions. I explore the methodologies from the general concepts of research to the specific methods and procedures I used.

Methodology

Power and Knowledge

Foucault saw power and knowledge as inherently and intricately linked; each embedded in the other.

> Those who have knowledge have power, and those who have power control the ability to gather and disseminate knowledge. (Palys, 1992:18)

For Durkheim (1956) the important social facts of life were social practices and institutions such as education, religion, law and the economic system which existed before us, and which all exert an influence on all of us which is not a product of the will, but which determine it from without and inevitably shape our actions. Social justice and equality would then be reaffirmed by sharing knowledge

which would enable individuals to resist the influence of the social facts and eventually reverse them for change.

The Research Function

Foucault did not deny the role of data and the importance of attempting to account for its use. However, he agreed that knowledge is a social product and that:

> ... attempts to understand social facts must situate data in context and therefore offer a realistic perspective of cause and effect. (Palys, 1992:15).

He saw this as a natural science model with the observer aloof and dispassionate. Yet this seems to be the basis of investigation of many social issues in psychology, sociology, economics, human geography, and education where the facts take precedence over the reasons determining them.

The research function is to increase human knowledge, all progress depends on it. Hillway (1969:5-9) pointed out that prior to 1895, when the first research was conducted in the United States, educators attacked their problems mainly by trial and error. Tradition determined the curriculum, experience taught practical lessons, and theories such as those of Rousseau and Froebel brought gradual improvements in educational procedures. However, nothing more exact than public opinion existed before the application of the scientific approach.

Scientific Enquiry

All methods used in modern research are based on the general approach to human problems referred to as the scientific method of inquiry, which is basically a systematic way of thinking. John Dewey (1933) referred to it as:

> ...an active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends. (9)

Educational research as a social science requires a scientific approach to the investigation and solution of education's problem. As a science, research becomes a means of measuring, analysing, and accurately describing characteristics of a subject, for its precise facts and provable principles. The facts can then be applied in the form of concrete and effective action (Hillway, 1969). Research always includes the following components:

1. a question in need of an answer or a problem in need of solution
2. evidence or data gathered by the researcher having relevance to the question or problem
3. thorough analysis and interpretation of the data to determine their meaning
4. a conclusion or hypothesis based on the evidence solve the problem posed. (Hillway, 1969:5).

Some research may be aimed at fact finding, consequently the conclusions will represent not a broad generalization or theory, but only the true facts about a

given situation or event. Yet, if useful generalizations can be drawn from the facts, they may establish principles with a potentially wide application. These principles point to what "should be" based on the fact of "what is". As principles developed through research, are always more significant and usable than facts alone, this is referred to as grounded theory generating (Hillway, 1969).

Every competent research project, pure or applied, possesses value if it adds to the sum of knowledge about education. Pure or basic research is undertaken to determine true facts or theories without consideration of immediate application, this is knowledge for its own sake. Applied research, in contrast, aims at finding the solution to some practical difficulty in a localized situation. It attempts to invoke specific action that "should be" taken in dealing with a practical problem; consequently it is often referred to as "action" research. The difference between pure and applied research lies in the objective. This must not be interpreted to mean that one type of research is necessarily better than another. Basic research generally leads to practical consequences. Applied research may seem less useful to education as a whole. Its results usually apply to one situation only; whereas the conclusions reached from pure research usually hold true for a variety of situations. An accumulation of results from several similar action

studies may lead inductively to some important general principle. Furthermore, no truth ever lies dormant for long, however theoretical it may be; sooner or later it is transformed into action (Hillway, 1969).

Qualitative vs Quantitative

The debate over qualitative versus quantitative orientations in research methodologies is to be explored here. It is important to realize that this dichotomy revolves around the gathering, treatment and interpretation of the data. Dabbs (1982:32) indicated that the "notion of quality is essential to the nature of things". Qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things. In contrast quantity is elementally "an amount of something" and quantitative research refers to counts and measures of things.

The social sciences have overly depended on quantitative measures, even when representativeness and sufficiency of sample size, failed to meet the requirements needed to obtain statistically meaningful results (Berg, 1989). Qualitative methods are often labelled non-scientific. Borman, LeCompte, and Goetz (1986) argued that this criticism arises from "an erroneous equation of the term

'empirical' with quantification, rather than with any real defect in the qualitative paradigm itself." (51)

Quantitative strategies emphasise a more positivist view by providing large quantities of rigorous, reliable, verifiable data and the statistical testing of empirical hypotheses. Qualitative approaches focus on the naturally emerging meanings assigned to the experiences. Included among these are emotions, motivations and other subjective aspects, such as experiences and conditions affecting the naturally evolving lives of individuals or/and groups.

Intrusive vs Unobtrusive Strategies

The methodological strategies include interviews or ethnography study. Both of these methods have varying degrees of intrusion. One can also utilize unobtrusive approaches. Interviewing is a data gathering method which can involve either direct contact with direct response (questionnaires and interviews), or direct contact with no response (observational techniques, aptitude and psychological testing).

Ethnography required concentrated recording and prolonged observation of details so that historically perceived patterns are verified through further observations in their natural settings. The aim of ethnography is to reconstruct the details and characteristics of the

phenomenon. Interviews are then conducted to validate the perceptions of the patterns. A researcher with time limitations may decide to favour alternative ways of collecting data and supporting it with ethnographic methods. The result of this combination would be the case study.

Unobtrusive measures do not require contact, nor response, between researcher and the participant. Using this method there are three sources of data available to the researcher: archival, erosion/accretion measures and content analysis.

Printed sources of data are frequently used in the documentary method of collecting data. Factual sources are records of meetings, application files, education reports and official correspondence. Primary sources are direct means of observing facts.

Documentary research represents a longitudinal accumulation of data for analysis of past and current events. It lowers research costs and is less influenced by the reactivity of the researcher. Documentary research implies that one can go back to a concrete artifact to subject it to greater scrutiny; and that others, who might disagree with the findings or interpretation, can work from the same documents. Because the distribution of the data is unknown prior to the research, it allows for the situation

to reveal itself, to show variance or invariance as patterns emerge based on the number of documents available.

Furthermore, Berg (1989), Guyette (1983), and Palys (1992) all agreed that the use of official data deals

a) with matters of relevance to social facts

b) is outside the influence of the investigator

c) describes a "reality" representing a group mind.

They also stated that researchers should always consider the reactivity of the archival source as a selective deposit and survival of data. This includes public and private archives and records, commercial media accounts, actuarial and official documentary records.

One unpredictable aspect of this type of methodology could be the unearthing of a particular piece of data, which could re-direct the research, because a fact that does not fit requires explanation. Unexpected findings could lead to a recognition of the event preceding its discovery.

Caution should be employed when using archival records, as they are not always appropriate to some research questions. Also, there is the potential to overlook the following facts:- while it is possible to convert detailed, qualitative descriptions into quantitative scales for the purpose of statistical analysis; it is not always possible to convert purely quantitative measures into detailed, qualitative descriptions. Statistical concepts are useful

to summarize the information and data obtained. Quantitative data is "raw data" in need of interpretation to be presented in either tabular or graphical form.

Ethical Concerns in Cross-cultural Research

Guyette (1983) has pointed out that Native American Peoples are usually treated as "objects" of research rather than "subjects". This makes it possible for research to support domination, exploitation and oppression. We live in a world where information is interpreted and organized in such a way that the views of a small group of people are presented as objective knowledge; as "The Truth".

Maria Mies (Guyette (1983) stated:

> Research, which so far has been largely the instrument of dominance and legitimation of power elites, must be brought to serve the interests of the dominated, exploited and oppressed groups..." (123).

Kirby and McKenna (1989:16-17) have coined the term **"research from the margins"**, to describe research related to experiences leading to social change. They define margins as the context in which those who suffer the injustice, inequality and exploitation live their lives. Peoples can be marginalized not only in terms of resources, but by exclusion from the process of creating knowledge and the denial of access to, and use of, that knowledge. This

culminates in what Freire (1985) calls the logic of domination:

> ...logic of domination represents a combination of historical and contemporary ideological and material practices that are never completely successful, always embody contradictions, and are constantly being fought over within asymmetrical relations of power. (xii)

Research from the margins is concerned with creating knowledge that explains and helps change the world in which we live. This type of research is necessary in order to see our world differently and more authentically; to share truths, and expose a hidden side of a society that professes to be democratic and unprejudiced.

Guyette (1983) advanced the use of community-based research, by pointing out that research conducted in Native American communities has not returned to the communities. In other words, the researchers were more concerned with proving their theories than with the cultural processes underlying them. Research was mostly limited to specific areas of interest within the culture, which was often classified as "primitive". Community-based research is action research, as it is practical, oriented towards the documentation and resolution of a problem, and is an outgrowth of the applied trend of research. George (1976) argued that research concerned with social change should focus on the rich and powerful and not on those in the margins. She said:

> Let the poor study themselves. They already know what is wrong with their lives and if you truly want to help them, the best you can do is give them an idea of how their oppressors are working now, and can be expected to work in the future. (289)

Kirby and McKenna (1989), agreed that the above research is essential, but they added that subordinate groups have been structurally blocked from the process of selecting, naming, disseminating and evaluating knowledge. They pointed out that their experiences indicated that people on the margins often know that something is wrong, but their concerns are interpreted as a personal problem, or failing, rather than as a public issue. This was confirmed by Spindler (1987) who advanced the premise that knowledge production "reflects both the distribution of power and the principles of social control" (171); and that the research and dissemination process helps to construct and perpetuate current power relations. Freire (1985) advocated that by beginning with the experiences of those who have been silenced, the process of knowledge production is transformed and the ideological power base is challenged.

Freire (1985) went on to say that research from the margins is not research on the peoples as objects of research; but of the peoples, for the peoples, and with the peoples. It is an act of solidarity in which collaboration is essential. It requires connecting the personal with the political. First, as a process of inter-subjectivity which

demands authenticity and dialogue, in which all are respected as knowing subjects; and second, as a critical reflection involving peoples's social reality.

Consultants

Kirby and McKenna (1989), Guyette (1983) and Freire (1985) all agreed that the people who may benefit from the research, or be affected by it, can be sources of insight and direction. They do not need research experience per se, but they must have experience in relation to the research question. Kirby & McKenna (1989) stated such people can keep the researcher focused during the various stages of the data gathering, warn against pitfalls, and most importantly keep the researcher honest in the face of the data and interpretation. They can also be special confidants with whom to explore reactivity; and can provide feedback and personal support (Ibid.:72). Berg called them "collaborators, informants, or guides (1989:59) . Guyette (1989:xiv) preferred the terms "participants or better yet, consultants" to alleviate the "negative aspects of the term informant" and reinforce the equality of the relationship with the researcher. These individuals represent the "emic" knowledge from within the lived experience which counteracts the "etic" of the researcher from the outside. As such they

have the strategic advantage of being part of the group or situation under investigation (Berg, 1989).

Triangulation

Berg (1989) warned that methodology is not to be examined in a vacuum. Data-gathering techniques are linked to theoretical perspectives. They are associated with the motivation for choosing the research topic, the conduct of the research, and ultimately the analysis. Each method reveals slightly different facets of the same symbolic reality; "a different line of sight directed towards the same point." By combining several methods, the researcher obtains a more substantive picture of reality; a richer, more complete perspective of the theoretical concepts and meanings. It also leads to various means to verify these elements. This is called triangulation, because usually three data-gathering techniques investigate the same phenomenon. Additionally, triangulation referred to a variety of data sources, references, investigators, and theories; which allow researchers to offer perspectives other than their own. Denzin (1978) called it the "logic of triangulation":

> No single method will ever meet the requirements of interaction theory. Careful recording of situations and selves does not offer direct data on the wider spheres of influence acting on the observed. Multiple methods of observation must be employed to reveal different aspects of the empirical reality. (28)

Researchers are instructed to use research strategies composed of multiple methods in a single investigation, what Spradley called creating "an ethnographic record" (1979, 69-77). Qualitative research is most interested in how humans arrange themselves in the various social settings and make sense of their surroundings. The analysis of qualitative data allows the researcher to discuss in detail the various social contours, and processes, human beings use to create and maintain their social reality. This explanation is called the "symbolic interactionism perspective": an umbrella concept under which one may place a variety of related theoretical orientations, involving a set of propositions that describe, and explain, some aspects of human behaviour.

First Nations in Transition

Certain trends have shaped First Nations' community developments during the recent past. The movement towards self-determination has resulted in the revitalization of Native solutions to socio-economic problems, while still retaining, and reviving, tribal traditions. Guyette (1983)

indicated that in terms of recent social and economic development, Native communities have often been impacted by the trend toward the Development Theory, implying a position of superiority in a hierarchy based on one dominant culture's world view imposed on another culture. This theory is also called neo-colonialism as it followed colonialism but endorses much of the same hierarchial structures, values and objectives.

Summary

The Methodology discussion reinforced the need to present the emic perspective of Native Education. The issues raised by the Literature Search in Chapter 1 were oriented towards the Development Theory are now aimed at the process of participation in the research endeavour in order to gain the necessary knowledge to effect changes to reverse the practices of neo-colonialism towards empowerment and self-determination. This also challenges the researcher to become part of the problem solving process by using approaches which will generate relevant information and new grounded theories.

Research Design

Methods

Palys (1992) stated:

> ...there are no formulas that dictate the right way or best way to do research - there are only decisions to be made on the basis of one's objectives (14).

Consequently, the documentary method of research was my primary approach; although I used the interview method to clarify, and to corroborate my findings and understanding which were either preceded or followed by observation. Documentation is quantitative in nature, dealing with characteristics that can be identified and counted. Qualitative interpretations are often required to ascertain what to classify in order to define traits and characteristics. The research enterprise was an attempt to discover what had happened in the course of time, and construct an emic, meaningful, and interpretive description of people and situations involved in past events, in addition to current issues. The research is also descriptive, aiming to portray accurately the characteristics of a particular group of individuals or situation(s). The exploration leads to understanding the phenomenon as it occurs. So there was a need for accuracy, to minimize bias, to maximize the representativeness of sample and results.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability in research means that future observations of the same phenomenon would give the same results, and that different observers using the same procedures would reach the same conclusions. This could be interpreted as consistency or stability over time or inter-rater reliability (e.i. aptitudes, attitudes, values, traits).

Validity means we are indeed measuring what we want to measure. It is not synonymous to reliability but cannot exist without it. Reliability and validity in a researcher's data have always to be considered, they can never be assumed and each has to be established individually. Palys (1992:71-72) cautions that there are various categories of validity to be considered:

1. Criterion, construct, and convergent validity are related to the extent of correlation between the findings and the criterion, empirical tools, or comparative results obtained from proven measures.
2. External validity refers to the degree of generalization of one's results across people, settings, or times others than those in which the data were gathered.
3. Face validity is a very limited test based on weather the instrument (test, scales) seems to be a reasonable indicator of what it is supposed to measure.

4. Internal validity refers to the unambiguous attribution of the differences observed to the experiential treatment rather than to other plausible explanations.
5. Divergent validity involves demonstrating that one's measures produces results different from other measures unrelated.
6. Predictive validity occurs when the researcher gathers data on the measure and criterion at two different points. The results would have to be correlated to establish the predictive validity.
7. Statistical conclusion validity is tied to the notion of statistical significance which is related to the elementary probability theory. In research, statistics look at relationships among factors of interest.

The document research required the following steps be taken: location of files and documents, their external evaluation for authenticity, their internal evaluation for credibility, objectivity, and completeness; and their interpretation for relevance and true meaning. As I searched the records made available to me and checked each piece of data, I consistently asked myself if and how they were relevant to my research.

This was a process of discernment: not all documents in the files were relevant to the research. Accumulation of records such as travel vouchers, requests for payments of

supplies, rental agreements and such were authentically related to the administration of the education benefits and as such were "reliable and valid", but they had no direct relevance to the questions guiding the research and therefore had to be considered as having no validity or reliability in this research.

I have also taken precautions to reduce my cultural bias, in order to be objective while still remaining guided by the insights of consultants. Therefore, the use of interviews in the research process was restricted to confirm or clarify my understandings of policies and their application, and to elaborate on the issues revealed by the research.

Procedures Used

The inductive procedure provided a phenomenological understanding of the process from the perspective of the persons involved (emic), rather than from external criteria of evaluation (etic). It was not so much a testing of theories as it was a way of trying to understand the process. This inductive approach is grounded theory generating so it required flexibility and breadth of coverage.

Following are the stages I took in the development of my research project:

1. Inviting Community input: Dec. 93 to April 94
2. Defining research idea
3. Reviewing previous research: Jan. - March 94
4. Redefining the research idea
5. Documenting related research/Inventory resources
6. Defining research methodology/methods
7. Is the research plan appropriate? March - April 94
8. Collecting data and analysing: April - July 94
9. Interpreting results: May - August 94
10. Consulting with Consultants: June 94 - August 94
11. Preparing research report: June - October 94
12. Defending Thesis: November 94
13. Improving/Printing/Binding: November 94
14. Reporting findings to the Band: January 95

Delimitations

As I approached the topic of research I knew I was mostly concerned with the recorded facts. Gradually, I became aware of the extent of the delimitations as more and more questions and inquiries surfaced during the research process, analysis and discussions. It was, originally, my intention to discredit the figures published by D.I.A.N.D. and point the need for further research and empowerment of the local Education Authority.

Subjects Sampling

Two consultants were available to provide a clear basis for understanding the education policy, its interpretation, and application. The Education Authority Director and the Education Authority Counsellor also served as advisors pointing out additional resources and references while acting as mediators between the Chief and Band Council and the researcher to monitor the research process and progress.

The Elders who contributed their understandings were the result of a fortuitous encounter which redirected the research conclusions and exposed the ideological and philosophical disparities between the First Nations' peoples and our western views of education, leadership, and power. The opportunity presented itself and I seized it.

In this research the files were the "subjects": I did not propose to work directly with individuals, but with the documents representing them. Consequently, all the files of the people included in the definition of a Band Member, sponsored for post-secondary education during the period September 1980 to April 1994, were the main documentary resources for this research.

Data Collection

The current employment of people was observable in the community activities. Residence was determined from

documents or public knowledge of the consultants and the employers (Band, schools, college, government office and agencies). Local private business's were readily identified.

Students were selected into the Post secondary education program according to the Patchawansis Band's criteria. I entered the research without any predetermined categories of analysis, or presuppositions about variables or variable relationships.

I was not worried that there would be a lack of data. Even a small number of files would have been sufficient but the treatment of information would have differed. I was confident I could be flexible enough in my research to adapt to the circumstances and report the findings with equanimity. This was probably my assumption prior to the experience, however it has now been tested and proven true.

Document analysis required that categories of data be clearly and explicitly defined so that other researchers can apply them to the same content in order to verify the reliability and validity of the proceedings and conclusions. The classifications revealed themselves posteriori as I accessed the file information/documentation.

Disadvantages

I had to be constantly aware of shifts in recording, selection, procedures and policies over time that could account for the context of any document, as this could have influenced the findings.

Some of the dangers I needed to avoid were personal. My bias against governmental statistics could have led me to to loose my objectivity. Failure to locate all available sources of information would have restricted my understanding. Inferring from early documents conceptions of later times would have left me blind to the policy and procedural changes. Assuming that something did not occur because no mention of it could be found or that the evidence in official documents was always correct would have led to different interpretations, and finally that incomplete or partially erroneous documents had no value to the research would have eliminated a significant portion of the data source.

I would have liked to interview representatives of D.I.A.N.D. about the interpretations and findings. Due to a move, I could not.

Data Analysis

As I worked questions arose. Data analysis was required to make sense of the findings and to discover

patterns which emerged. Various methods of analysis were possible; text analysis, frequency distribution, themes, which could be converted into tables.

To organize information, and/or describe characteristics nominal or categorical, ordinal, and ratio measurement were possible. This is called descriptive statistics and the Lotus 1.2.3. accommodated this research.

Direct observation in the work place represented the employment structure of the community and revealed the distribution and level of employment of the post-secondary educated Patchawansis Band Members. The consultants were also involved in the analysis as they corroborated or questioned the findings. Thereby they cooperated in a climate of critical enquiry and guided the researcher to access further resources which provided supporting information.

Ethics

Community-based research is a useful tool for knowledge and for social and community development. Too often, research does not return to the community, so it became important to me to develop a cooperative relationship, one which would benefit all the participants. The research project had to be locally approved prior to me being allowed

to continue. The results will be turned over to the Patchawansis Band for their information and possible action.

The Patchawansis Band through the Chief and Council had the freedom to choose to cooperate and provide guidance. An agreement was reached on the responsibilities and role of the researcher (Appendix I), the consultants, and of the Education Authority (Appendix II) thus ensuring a positive experience for all parties. The interviewees had the option of participating, and of determining the nature and extent of the interview proceedings and recordings. I did provide the original question based on the general topic I was investigating, and from there the subsequent questions resulted from pursuing clarification of specifics revealed by the interviewees. I directed the interview in a manner to make the individuals more cooperative and less defensive than with a series of predetermined questions. This also allowed me to be more flexible and responsive in the in-situ context. Chapter 5 is an example of taking advantage of such an opportunity to pursue understanding.

To respect the anonymity of the Band and subjects certain precautions had to be taken. Local maps were omitted. It was possible to do the geographical and name changes to prevent identification. A pseudonym was used to refer to the Band studied. Also, during the research process, the names of the individual subjects were replaced

by a code number which only the researcher and one consultant had records of.

The confidentiality of files and documents was respected. Furthermore, all documents/files used in the research were either used within the offices of the Band Education, or if the need arose for the documents to be removed, special written requests had to be made. Discussions of the findings and meanings were done within the privacy of offices occupied by the consultants or at the discretion of the interviewees. Permission to record interviews was requested and permission to quote individual passages was also expressly sought.

The research proposal was approved by the Ethics Committee at the University of Alberta according to their criteria and so, I set out back to the community...

CHAPTER 3

THE FIELD EXPERIENCE

The Community

The community is located in North Central Alberta, about 500 km from Edmonton. The hamlet began as a Hudson's Bay Trading Post in 1858. In 1899, Treaty 8 was signed and the Reserve was established. In 1901, the Oblate fathers and the Sisters of Providence opened and maintained the Catholic Mission and residential school near the Reserve. The Anglicans set up their mission near the trading post. Both the Anglicans and Roman Catholics introduced Residential Schools which were operative until the late 1960's.

The community has a municipal form of government while the Reserve has been under the jurisdiction of the Indian Act of Canada. A community profile (Appendix III) is included for the reader's information.

The Research Experience

The research was first proposed in December 1993 and was followed in January 1994 with discussion with the Patchawansis Chief and Band Council and Education Authority Manager who perceived the relevance of the project to their

future educational development, and agreed to it, in written form, in January 1994.

I arrived in the locality on April 20th, 1994 and resided until May 25th, 1994. Because of clear agreements between the Patchawansis Band, the Education Authority and the consultants, the data gathering was done within the positive atmosphere of a professional relationship which diminished the threat of conflict and enabled me to ascertain other crucial factors such as time and financial limitations which affected the data collection period and analysis. Shared understanding of the purpose of the research fostered local ownership of the research which lead to a willingness to invest many hours in discussion of observational data, interpretations, and rectification procedures which I felt resulted in a professionally productive and intellectually stimulating experience for all participants.

The dialogue with the consultants was crucial to the analysis. Often what seemed to be a flagrant handicap to success revealed deeper political, or administrative, restrictions. Such was the case of the suspension clauses: if a subject self-terminated his education experience, or is terminated, he is ineligible for funding for three (3) years. A second offense will make him ineligible for five (5) years. Again here the subject is endorsing the

responsibility of failure. I will point out in the analysis that this is often a scapegoating process and exemplify this interpretation.

Field Notes

At inception, I started to keep a field log documenting my readings, approaches, contacts, reflections, questions and interpretations. Soon, I also expressed intuitions, apprehensions and reactions. Any additional information was also jotted down as I never really knew what else could be useful later on, or might lead to unexpected findings. Articles, business cards and other odds and ends found their way in also.

This process became a useful way to tame my subjectivity and resulted in increased awareness such as the realization that as I was compiling the data manually my overall impression was negative: the education enterprise seemed doomed. As the research progressed the shift occurred and a more a more optimistic perspective emerged.

Data Gathering

The Education Authority office was opened from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily. There was no space for me to work in on a daily basis, therefore, my practice was to go in at the beginning of the day to sort through documents, or the

filing cabinets, and pull fifty to sixty files pertaining to the Post-Secondary education participants. Next I would draw a list of the files and request permission to take them out of the Education office to my work space, which also served as my residence, for data collection. This space meant I could set my own hours of work and have privacy which was conducive to preserving the anonymity of the subjects, and confidentiality of the data.

Initial contacts with Education Authorities had indicated that I would "...be lucky to have fifty to sixty files to work with." Therefore, I was greatly surprised to discover that the filing cabinets I had to sort through contained all the files pertaining to education at all levels, and to special education as well since September 1980. Systematically, I sorted out the post-secondary education files from the accumulation of fourteen years. Gradually I obtained two hundred and forty-six (246) files. My research had taken a new direction by sheer volume!

Each file corresponded to a participant. However, it did not correspond to only one educational endeavour as I soon found out. Therefore, to reflect the educational enterprise I decided to use each endeavour as a separate "subject" and resulted in three hundred and twenty-four (324) separate ones (see **Table 2** next page).

TABLE II

TIMES ATTEMPTED	PARTICIPANTS	NUMBER OF ATTEMPTS/SUBJECTS
1x	185	185
2x	43	86
3x	16	48
4x	1	4 (interrupted)
5*	1	1 (continuous)
Total:	**246**	**324**

Table 2: Distribution of Educational Attempts

Note: * This participant had five (5) cummulative transfers and progressions without interruption since the original application. See ** on page 53.

An entry point meant the inception of a program of study: if the course had a duration of more than one academic year (diploma or degree) then the whole program would be one entry code for the length of time it took to complete the educational program. I entered a two-digit code number based on the year the subject entered the post-secondary education program, followed by a three-digit number indicating the alphabetical order the subject occupied in that given year, i.e. 94-001. If the subject

had more than one educational entry it was cross-referenced even if years separated the entries. With each year the last three numbers would re-start at 001- to give a clear picture of the yearly participants, and overlap as the students progressing along their educational plans were given priority over new selections. If someone dropped out, the portion of the program completed would be noted. Transferring from one field of study to another was not considered a termination of education unless the level changed i.e. from trades to academic is a change in level.

** With the participant who had five (5) progressions since 1985 (without interruption) the institutions allowed the transfer to occur within the discipline from certificates to diplomas which were then partially credited to an undergraduate degree now completed. This was not considered, in this case, an interruption: there seemed to have been a loophole then (prior to 1989) in the interpretation or in the application of the policy resulting in the file showing as one educational attempt. Maybe the precedent set by this participant's had served as a warning to D.I.A.N.D. to avoid further costly incidences because they revised the previous regulations and replaced them in in 1989. Without access to the previous policy and procedures it was hard to say. Of course, the possibility

of this being the case of a human error was also considered.

I proceeded and recorded information in a systematic way. The basic application forms used by the Education Authority had not changed over the years. Therefore, all the basic information was uniform. Here and there I found files where some information was missing. I recorded that as well, but it was a very low percentage and did not apply to whole sections, but to individual questions such as the level of previous education, age, or name of last school attended. As the acceptance for sponsorship was mostly based on acceptance from the institution selected, these deficiencies were not considered too important at the time of application. However, they often resulted in having a direct implication on the success of the individual as we will see in the analysis. I never saw a file where someone got refused for sponsorship after they had been accepted by an institution except when the application was made in the last quarter of the fiscal year, and they would then be referred for priority acceptance in the following fiscal year.

The initial data gathering meant sorting through the files and looking critically at all correspondence, documentation and recording systematically the data available. The data was first recorded manually, using

classification and comments on a columnar pad to prepare the format for a computerized spreadsheet format. It allowed for twenty six (26) classifications to emerge naturally, therefore the spreadsheet reflected the data instead of the technology. All the data was eventually recorded manually, and then computerized even if the proceedings overlapped with the analysis which was concurrent.

Supporting documentation on the file was often lacking: educational plans, program of studies, transcripts and program completion or termination were often missing. There was rarely any trace of career orientation or pre-testing results. It seemed that this was left to the institutions and that there was no cooperation between them and the Education Authority to share information. Confirmation letters of acceptance and requests for payments of tuition fees were frequently documented. When the subjects "self-terminated" their education often there was rarely any correspondence. The payment records were often my only indication of the fact, so the reasons were unknown as opposed to incidences when an institution terminated the subjects and sent an official notification indicating the reason(s) for termination: absenteeism and most frequently failure to meet academic requirements. I will elaborate on the latter in the analysis.

Also on file were records, notes and observations made by the Education counsellor(s) which had interacted with the subjects. These notes reflected much of the personal concerns and problems of the Band members: funding, personal and family issues were encountered.

Some files contained incidental letters from the subjects reporting their progress, their marks or other achievements. I soon remarked that they were generally from the academically "successful students" and preceded their additional requests for further assistance to pursue specific needs such as participation or attendance of conferences, seminars, research projects, and travels to and from venues in Canada or abroad. These requests were honoured according to the financial resources available unless they were unrelated to the educational experience of the subject.

Other documents often encountered confirmed the subject "Indian Status" and Band membership. This was found in many files of off-reserve residents and in cases where families had applied for Indian Status (excluding C-31).

Unexpected findings were the letters awarding "Band Incentive Bursaries" to University students completing their degrees: $300.00 for Undergraduates and $500.00 for a Master's degree. This award system was re-instigated in 92-93 and the amounts differed from the resolutions passed in

1990 because D.I.A.N.D. has opposed these disbursements previously. Furthermore, under special conditions and for "financial destitution or hardship" the Chief and Council members awarded $1000.00 relief bursaries to students (3) whose education would have been endangered otherwise. These special bursaries all went to students in the last year of their undergraduate studies.

I noticed as well that the files since 1991 had a gradual improvement in documentation and maintenance even if there was no specific standard prescribed. The current files are the most documented, yet some more paperwork is required: course of studies, transcripts, documentation of previous education and course completion documentation.

In regards to the education counsellor, the job description is very vague, and the qualifications for the position are subjective. Imagine the difficulties and frustrations encountered by the incumbent when the subjects have major personal needs for counselling, rather than financial or educational needs which can be met by their chosen institutions' personnel. Furthermore, the counsellor has neither the tools required to do career orientation nor testing, and the institutions do not provide copies of their records which would enable the counsellor to monitor the subject's progress and achievements, or even to evaluate the suitability of the subjects to their programs. If this were

made available it would then make it possible for the counsellor to guide the subject towards realistic expectations and educational enterprises. This could prevent a large number of failures, frustrations and waste of resources.

Understanding Policies and Procedures

My first few days consisted of upgrading the community profile (see Appendix III) and researching funding regulation policies and documents from the D.I.A.N.D. (1989); the Patchawansis Band (1990); and the Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council (1992) to understand policy procedures, regulations and restrictions governing post-secondary education of band members. The questions raised from the policies, procedures and practices were taken to my consultants and my understandings were substantiated:

1. Prior to 1990 - the Patchawansis Band followed the D.I.A.N.D. post-school policy and procedures. Since then it has attempted to make them culturally relevant.
2. Bill C-31 since 1986 has been administered directly by D.I.A.N.D. (Edmonton Office) as the Patchawansis Band had not accepted them as members. This means that the funds for education which the Education Authority administers are reduced by the amount reserved for C-31's. However the D.I.A.N.D. statistical reports do

not differentiate between the various funds allocated to each group, or the number of subjects and rates of completion in each group.

3. D.I.A.N.D. keeps very close control on the application of the post-secondary education policy. "Education is a Treaty Right" is interpreted as "everyone is eligible to take the program of their choice ... if the institution which delivers it ... accepts them into the program".

As seen in the forthcoming analysis of the data, this approach is often counterproductive and misleading. Moreover, it restricts the administrative mandate of the Education Authority by preventing the development of more appropriate selection procedures, of long term goals of recruitment, and implementation of recovery practices. Education becomes a <u>service</u> and is administered as such, provided upon request and only to interested parties with no obligation attached. It is a <u>right</u> exercised by only 5% of the Band population. However, a right implies obligations and none are specified in the policy and procedures manuals. As we will see in Chapter 5 this contrasts very strongly with the native perceptions of obligation to the collectivity which supersedes individual pursuits.

These perceptions were confirmed through discussions with my two consultants and with a previous Director of the

Education Authority. Subjects as well, confirmed that their experiences reflected this individualistic approach to education. It seems that the desire to be a benefit to the collectivity is first, a stage of idealism in Grade 10 (63%) which decreases gradually in Grades 11 (47%) and 12 (32%). Secondly, it could be part of the maturation process as the subjects come to terms with themselves and the world around them their desire to be of assistance to others seems to grow as the ages of the subjects who have returned indicate. Maybe it is a reflection of their increasing sense of empowerment after having attained certain measures of expertise and success or could it be a result of the mid-life crisis resolution? Only psychological research could clarify this point.

Some information came from the reading of the policy and procedures:

1. Graduate funding is restricted to 16 months each for Masters and Ph.D. This will have to be re-evaluated to accommodate thesis research and completion in the future as more members enter graduate and doctoral programs. Most universities have a two year residency requirement.
2. Funding is available as follows:
   Minimum course load is 3 courses per term, at this rate it could take up to 50 months to complete a 3 or 4 year

undergraduate degree. There is no obligation to do intersession courses. However, the total eligible months is 40 months so this is misleading (Appendix IV) to many subjects who find themselves having to overload themselves towards the end of their programs to graduate. This also infers that sponsorship cost is then increased by having been extended for up to 2 years beyond the standard requirement. This significantly raises the cost of a degree, especially if the subject has dependents as well. It also means that financial resources are limited for others to benefit from them.

3. If the subject obtains a bursary, or a grant, this does not affect the amount of sponsorship he receives from the Band Education Authority.
4. If the subject attends an American university the funds are limited to Canadian funds, not U.S.
5. Having compared the two I discovered that sponsorship through the Band Education Authority is more advantageous financially than sponsorship through Student Loans. The maximum amount available for a subject is higher, and for a longer period of time. However, it only applies to public institutions and not to private ones. (Appendix V - Living Expenses Assistance). Tuition, supplies, travel (4 x year),

conference costs, books, uniforms and special tutoring are supplementary. And of course, there is no repayment clause.

6. Post-secondary education is still an individual pursuit, a matter of personal interest. The main criteria for funding is acceptance by an institution for education. This approach is often detrimental to the successful completion of the pursuit as the subjects struggle with having to reconcile their personal values with the conflicting societal (WASP), cultural (First Nations/Cree), and sometimes familial ones as well.

7. The funds for education are disbursed by D.I.A.N.D. in monthly instalments according to a fiscal year. On April 30th a yearly report and budget are submitted.

In looking at the Education Budgets **(Table 3)** the figures indicate the sharp increase of the cost of post-secondary education. They also reflect the increasing disbursements made to obtain degrees and university graduates. These sums will continue to increase in the next decade as more of the education costs will be passed on to the learners through increased tuition fees. As a service it is costly, as an investment it is questionable and as a business is it profitable?

TABLE III

Education Budget	1981 - 1982	$127,000.00
	1982 - 1983	$159,000.00
	1988 - 1989	$1.28 million

These are all inclusive figures: administration, support, staff, travel, office, tuition agreements with Northlands, AVC, and deficit financing. For more recent years, it was possible to separate the budget figures to reflect the U.C.E.P. and University /Professional (post-secondary education) from the other amounts:

1991 - 1992 U.C.E.P. and U/P	$475.985.00
1993 - 1994 U.C.E.P. and U/P	$774.470.00

(Patchawansis Band Education Reports 1982, 83, 89, 92, 94)

Table 3: Band Education Budgets

8. The files are now computerized with a system established by D.I.A.N.D. so that the files can be communicated directly by the computerized network. However, the system is more concerned with "data" relating to measurable factors than with the data which would represent the individuals as persons. Many of the files of individual information are never recorded in the official system which is not used to capacity.

And staff training in the use of the interfacing system has not been completed.

D.I.A.N.D. is seen as concerned only with results rather than with the process and/or factors influencing the results of education. Because D.I.A.N.D. controls the funds, sets the rates of assistance, produces the policy and procedures and sanctions the choice of educational institution to be attended, there is little the Education Authority can do about subject selection, re-allocating funds, long term planning, or repayments. It's function becomes mostly a middle-management one with very little autonomy, or power to direct its own destiny. The colonial system still casts a long shadow. Therefore, Education is administered, and retains the status of, being an individual "service" rather than an enterprise affiliated with the ideology, and goals of self-sustaining Band development. This could be changed through self-determination.

The Researcher as a Visible Presence

Because I had resided and worked locally previously (1986-87, 1990-91), many people, both reserve and non-reserve residents, found themselves comfortable asking me questions, volunteering their insights, experiences or comments for the research. I discovered that their perceptions were more of "an audit of the administration"

rather than a research of the ins and outs of the situation. Many told me what was wrong: these opinions were often one-sided and short-sighted in my estimation. However, I kept track of these unrequested comments from these representants of the local population about the "post-secondary education of Band members".

More than a few, I felt, were racist comments and some were directed towards me as a "white" researcher, and towards the subjects of the research. More often than not I found these comments to stem from negative experiences, misinformation or biased interpretations about the issues revolving around the financial aspects of resources development, and the socio-political power and the social issues resulting therein. However these comments represented a "reality" and I validated the individuals who expressed it. Overall, the comments resulted in increasing my determination to critically evaluate and question the issues.

In keeping the dialogue with the native knowledge, I had exchanges with past administrators and counsellors of the Band Education Authority, with "subjects", with Band Counsellors and Band members. Within the community I talked with employers, agency representatives, teachers, students and politicians which represented the outside perceptions.

I attempted to "triangulate" my finds from documents with observation and dialogues/interviews.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Presenting a careful and thorough analysis of the findings is an important part of the research process. A useful presentation requires objectivity and can often influence the outcome (action) which will impact the program or situation. Written reports have to be presented in a clear manner using tables and displays to advantage the use of the data. Guyette (1983) admonished the researcher working in community based research to report their findings in a clear and concise way to ensure that the readers will be assisted in their understanding and implementation of future action (98-99). The value of action research is in its impact on the community and in its application.

The qualitative data analysis is required in order to make sense of the raw data collected which was quantitative. My analysis consists of descriptive tables and texts interpreting the numerical information. The data analysis was made with the use of the Lotus 123 spreadsheet which provided distribution frequencies aiming to represent a realistic rendition of the findings.

As the data was collected, classifications emerged and three themes became evident. Firstly, the characteristics, of the subjects, secondly, the anticipated educational experience and thirdly, the present situation of the subjects. Sub-themes further delineated the data. Each subtheme is referenced by a number corresponding to a table column. Each of these themes will be discussed in detail and documented. Arising questions will be noted for possible future enquiry.

The study included two hundred and forty six (246) files which, as mentioned in Chapter Three, represented three hundred and twenty-four (324) separate educational enterprises as people entered the sponsored post secondary education program intermittently as seen in Table 2. The two hundred and forty six (246) individuals represent 5% of the current (1993) Band membership.

Unless specified otherwise, the figures quoted will be based on three hundred and twenty-four (324) subjects representing the complete participation of band members.

I noted that subjects with the most attempts (3, 4, or 5) were the most likely to switch program levels (upwards or downwards) and institution. These were also the most likely to change institutions.

The switch upwards is part of the tendency to upgrade one's qualification from Grade 12 towards University

degrees. However, the downward ones appear related to previous failure to meet academic requirements: subjects might have too high expectations of their abilities and previous educational experiences and therefore, they selected educational endeavours beyond their capabilities. The adjustment may have reflected this awareness.

This is an area which points to the necessity to improve orientation, selection, and documentation of applicants in the Post secondary Education Programs by establishing cooperative procedures between the Education Authority counsellor and the institutions' counsellors.

THEME 1 - SUBJECTS' CHARACTERISTICS

The characteristics of the subjects according to the basic information available from the application form contained within the subjects' files.

Tables are used to illustrate the subjects characteristics. Table 4 refers to demographic data while Table 5 pertains to the past educational history of the subjects.

1. Year

The survey spanned fourteen (14) years of post secondary education. The year is based on the fiscal year of March 31st to April 1st and differs from both the

academic year which is determined by the institutions and the calendar year.

TABLE IV

1	2	3	4	5		6				7
Year	#	Male:Female	Avg Age	Residence On	Off	Marital M	Cl	Status S	O	Number Deps.
1980	2	1:1	17.5	1	1			2		0
1981	3	0:3	29	1	2	1		2		8
1982	9	4:5	26	5	4	3	1	4	1	11
1983	11	7:4	27.3	8	3	3	1	6	1	21
1984	15	7:8	30.3	11	4	5	2	7	1	21
1985	20	7:13	27	10	10	8	2	10		40
1986	25	16:9	29.5	9	16	3	4	18		26
1987	26	10:16	28.7	8	18	9	4	12	1	46
1988	32	17:15	30.6	15	17	12	9	11		61
1989	33	10:23	28.9	14	18	7	5	21		50
1990	36	16:20	30.2	11	25	9	9	17	1	49
1991	38	15:23	30.3	14	24	10	7	20	1	65
1992	36	13:23	29.3	17	19	11	4	21		56
1993	38	18:20	31	16	22	14	10	14	_	69
	324	141:183	28.3	140	183	95	58	165	6	523

Table 4: Basic Demographic Data of Subjects

Key:

#	Number of Subjects
On	Residence on the reserve
Off	Residence off the reserve
M	Married
Cl	Common law
S	Single
O	Other
Deps.	Number of dependants

2. Number of Subjects

During that period, three hundred and twenty four (324) subjects participated in the pursuit of post secondary education. The yearly figures represent only the numbers of new recruits, therefore, the actual number of sponsorees at any one time is always greater.

The educational enterprise is maintained only as long as the subjects continue their chosen curriculum path and can, thereby, extend over a few academic and fiscal years.

The rate of growth of the program can not be demonstrated by subject registration only, due to the longer length of educational commitments overlapping.

3. Sex

There are forty two (42) more females than males registered overall. Registration for the program reveals a consistent increase over the fourteen (14) year period for both sexes. The female registration growth rate (45.9%) only exceeds that of males by 1%.

1989 and 1992 stand out as having the greatest variance of registration between the sexes with females demonstrating double the intake in those years. This is consistent with the national demographic data (D.I.A.N.D. 1989 and 1993) which reveals 3% and 2% more females in those years respectively.

Females of child bearing age might actually influence the frequency of re-entry and account for the final difference between male and female participation (42) over the fourteen year period.

4. Age

At inception of the research period, the age of the participants was not demonstrative of the age of those to be attracted throughout the following thirteen years. 31.5 years is the average age of participants within the last thirteen (13) years. When including the 1980 age of 17.5, the average is lowered to 28.3 years which would understate the reality.

The average age of the participants indicates that mature students are much more likely to be attracted to this endeavour as opposed to young adult. Overall, ages varied from 17 to 62.

5. Residence

Overall, one hundred and forty (140) subjects resided in the community/reserve at the time of registration in the program. One hundred and eighty five (185) had established residence elsewhere and one remained undocumented.

This difference could be explained by the fact that

students with multiple re-entries have already established residence off the reserve.

There is no residency (on the reserve) requirement; therefore the "urban natives" are well represented. The difference in participation between on and out of reserve residents is .76 which is consistent with the population distribution which is .80 in excess for out of reserve residents.

The incidence of family representation (4) is greater among out of reserve residents: parents and adult children are often enrolled simultaneously in post-secondary educational programs.

I could not help noticing that with regards to the distribution of on-reserve residents there were areas and families which had no representation at all during the fourteen (14) years. Similarly, band members residing in other reserves or on Crown Lands were very few (8). Could this be an indication that there is a need for the Education Authority to reach out? or is this again reflective of the perception of education as an individual pursuit?

6. Marital Status

There are more "singles" registered in the program than all other marital status combined. The Maximum Levels of Assistance For Living Expenses (APPENDIX V) might have been

a factor in encouraging registration of singles and single parents.

The funding levels (APPENDIX V) appeared to favour married students with an employed spouse and single parents over married students with a dependant spouse.

The revised Maximum Levels of Assistance for Living Expenses will be implemented as of May 1st, 1994. It would be interesting to do a follow-up study of its impact.

A serendipitous finding was the discovery of three (3) married couples enrolled simultaneously in the pursuit of a university education. This, in itself, presents opportunity for further investigation.

Additionally, the unexpected detection of kinship among five (5) immediate family members (father and four children) inadvertently leads the researcher to question the motivating factors of such an occurrence - a topic for future enquiry.

7. Dependants

Of the three hundred and twenty four (324) subjects, two hundred and eight (208) had dependants (which could include spouses). The number of dependants ranged from one (1) to six (6).

The total of the five hundred and twenty three (523) dependants indicates that the educational endeavour affects

more than the subjects themselves. The impact of parental post-secondary education on their families and/or conjugal relationship could be a topic for further investigation.

8. Previous Education (Table 5)

Education received within the boundaries of the Reserve/community (89) is much less a factor in pursuing post-secondary education than education obtained from the outside (227).

The margin between having received previous "on" reserve/community education versus "off" has been consistently widening in favour of having received education "off" site since 1985.. Could this indicate that earlier exposure to other settings has an influence on the later desire to pursue post-secondary education? This trend and the factors contributing to it could be the subject of further study. It could have direct impact on the schooling of the current K-12 students.

Eighteen (18) subjects had undocumented previous educational experience.

TABLE V

	8			9		10		11
	Education			Time Gap*		Previous Ed.**		Current
Year	On	Off	?	Years	Subjects	Level	Subjects	Completion
1980	1	0	1	Contd	56	-7	2	0
1981	1	2	0	1	50	7	9	4
1982	3	6	0	2	33	8	11	6
1983	5	6	0	3	19	9	31	14
1984	6	7	2	4	12	10	47	11
1985	7	12	1	5	8	11	42	15
1986	9	16	0	6	11	12	93	32
1987	6	20	0	7	15	12 Gen.	12	2
1988	9	23	0	8	7	G.E.D.	4	2
1989	7	21	5	9	7	Trades	6	1
1990	8	26	2	10	8	U.C.E.P.	19	5
1991	9	25	4	+10	19	Cert.	21	6
1992	9	26	1	+15	9	Diploma	3	2
1993	9	27	2	+20	9	Bachelor	8	4
				?	61	Part.P.S.	15	4
						In Prog.		35
						??	21	12
	89	227	18		324			

Table 5: Previous Education Experience

Key:

On	Residence on the reserve
Off	Residence off the reserve
?	Residence unknown
*	Time Gap represents the lapsed time since the termination of the previous education experience and the current engagement.
**	Previous Education includes information (could be multiple) about the cumulative past educational experience.
??	Undocumented
Contd	Students have not interrupted their studies
12 Gen.	Grade Twelve (12) General Diploma.
G.E.D.	General Equivalency Diploma.
Cert.	Certificate. (one (1) academic year or less)
Part.P.S.	Partial Post Secondary experience.
In Prog.	Studies in progress as of May 1994.

9. Time Gap

The variance in the time elapsed since the last educational enterprise and the current engagement is from zero (no interruption) to over twenty (20) years. One extreme case spanned fifty (50) years.

The highest number (61) reflects "undocumented" experiences. This highlights the lack of attention to detail in documentation and influences our results to this degree, thus revealing an area for improvement.

Approximately one third of the subjects (106) have either continued directly (56 of them) from their last educational undertaking into their next one or have spent (50 of them) one year or less before embarking on a new venture.

10. Previous Education Level

The figures previously stated include multiple educational experiences. Grade Twelve (12) appears to be the key to entering post-secondary education: roughly one third of subjects (109) have either completed it or obtained equivalency.

Grade Ten (10) and Eleven (11) seem to be perceived by the participants as sufficient to succeed in post secondary pursuits. This point has only been exemplified by the number of participants (89) who have attempted post

secondary education. It would be interesting to conduct further interviews to clarify this perception.

Subjects (53) below Grade Ten (10) are attempting post secondary education.

The representation of post secondary participation (76) indicates the interest of subjects to continue to improve their educational and professional qualifications.

Subjects with multiple entries do not always disclose post secondary education or if they do will tend to inflate a partial experience to a completed one; this undermines their success if they attempt to move upwards or laterally as they are then unable to meet the expected academic requirements as the documentation on files has demonstrated. Subjects who move downwards have increased chances of success.

11. Current Completion Level

Previous experience in secondary education is not indicative of current success as demonstrated by the high number of High School participants and their correspondingly low rate of success.

The experience of Grade Twelve (12) and Grade Twelve General subjects is not indicative of success in any future experience. This could be due to the borderline marks attained in the transcripts encountered.

The majority of the files, however, have no transcript so this point could be argued.

Another factor which could influence the success rate is the time elapsed since the last educational endeavour.

Current completion figures will be further elaborated upon in a subsequent section.

THEME 2 - ANTICIPATED EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

The anticipated educational experience documents the engagement of the students towards the realization of educational goals and the achievement attained based on available evidence.

12. Institutions Attended (APPENDIX VI)

The extensive list of Institutions Attended indicates the variety and diversity of interests and experiences. Overall, the preference is to attend institutions within the Province of Alberta as only twenty five (25) endeavours have been experienced out of province, five (5) of which are correspondence courses. This might be a reflection of the fact that provincial tuition rates are less costly than non provincial rates.

The importance of the Alberta Vocational College to the

education of these subjects is evidenced by one third of the total number of subjects having attended one of its campuses (66) and\or the Sunrise program (37).

This trend continues with the high participation at Keyano (33) and Grande Prairie Regional College (25). All other Colleges in the Province demonstrate a peppered enrolment.

The north/central geographical location of the institutions most attended by the study group might be a determining factor in selecting an institution. Perhaps further study could determine the extend of this factor in institution selection.

The variety of curriculum offered might influence institution choice along with factors of criteria, qualifications, and program capacity. Further research would be needed to state this for certain.

Upon interaction with participants I discovered that word of mouth reference is often a determining factor in selecting an institution or program. The extent of influence this has could be subject to further research.

The Sunrise Project, as a facilitator of two (2) years of university transfer courses, appears a popular choice among subjects. Popularity could also be a sign of

preference in selecting an institution which doesn't require a longer distance relocation.

The University of Alberta (28) has the advantage of geographical location and of the Sunrise program transferability over all other Alberta universities (12).

The variety of institutions illustrates the mobility, flexibility, willingness and breadth of interests by the subjects. It also exemplifies the variety of choices available to the subjects.

13. Fields of Study Undertaken

To ensure data congruency, classifications and levels of accreditation have been recorded **(Table 6)**. The data was compiled and is displayed in keeping with Governmental classifications (D.I.A.N.D.).

TABLE VI

13	14	15	16	17	18
Fields	Certificate	Diploma	License	Bachelor	Master
Administration/ Management/Economics/Commerce	13	9		8	
Education and related occupations	9			16	3
Social work and related occupations	11	11		4	
Health and related occupations	11			7	1
Clerical/ Secretarial	19				
Sciences/ Technologies	14	5		5	
Artistic/ Humanities	4			19	
General (unspecified)	7			14	
Legal/specific issues/ministry	1	5		9	3
UCEP	62				
Trades	3	2	49	—	—
Total	154	32	49	82	7

Table 6: Fields of Study Undertaken

14. Certificates Undertaken

Slightly less than half (154) of all subjects (324) elected to pursue certification. The definition of certificates is a loose one. They vary in length, depth, scope and marketability. (i.e. a weekend course in word processing differs dramatically from a ten (10) month Secretarial Arts Certificate.)

UCEP is the most frequent (62) certificate sought intimating the desire to seek further education. For the employment oriented, the "Clerical/Secretarial" (19) field attracts the greatest number of subjects seeking certification followed by "Science/Technology" (14), "Administration" (13), "Health" (11), "Social Work" (11) and "Education" (9). This inverted distribution may reflect complexity of the training required to obtain semi-professional status.

Another factor encountered here is the frequency of subjects who took programs which could be considered as "employee development" (directly related to an existent employment). These shorter courses, specific to skill development are funded through the Band Education Authority.

Does this mean that the Band Enterprises and outside employers rely on the Education Authority to train their personnel? Within the Band this could be considered as a collective endeavour. However, if outside employers who

collect employees' contributions towards employees' benefits which include training/education count on the same employees to be trained at the expenses of their Band, then investigation is needed in the work place.

In extreme cases, could there be a possibility that maybe the employee/subject is getting employer and Band subsidies simultaneously? And what if they were? As there was no correspondence (on files) between the Education Authority and the employers the possibilities must be considered as economically and ethically significant.

15. Diplomas Undertaken

Diplomas require sixteen (16) to twenty (20) months of training varying from one institution to another. Some of the diplomas can be recognized for equivalency in university transfer programs or provide advanced standing.

The popularity of "Social Work and related occupations" diplomas (11) exemplifies the attraction. Administration diplomas are also popular (9) as they imply management ability for a higher point of entry into the employment structure.

16. Licenses & Apprenticeship Undertaken

Forty nine (49) subjects elected to pursue trades

apprenticeship and licensing this being the second most frequent goal.

17. Bachelor Degrees Undertaken

With eighty two (82) subjects pursuing an undergraduate course of study, the aspirations of the Band members seem to have a strong presence at this level of academics.

"Artistic/Humanities" (19) (Bachelor of Arts) is not a well defined category as it encompasses a variety of domains that provide a broad base knowledge. Only three (3) subjects selected the Fine Arts category specifically over the Bachelor of Arts.

The Bachelor of Arts - General (14) has a wide following. Its attraction is based on the fact that it was a three (3) year program of study and most of it could be completed through correspondence (Athabasca University).

The "Education and related occupations" category (16) is more descriptive of the desired ends of students who select it.

18. Master Degrees Undertaken

This segment of subjects is indicative of the increasing interest in pursuing graduate work and of the

current popularity of "Education" (3) and "Legal" (3) field related professions.

The pursuit of Graduate Studies is a recent (1982 on) phenomenon and as such could be the source of future research. At this time six (6) of the studies are "in progress".

19. Certificates Completed (Table 7)

The Certificates rate of completion (37%) is lower than expected and indicates a consistent stream of individuals completing their certification during the period of study. Investigation shows that shorter programs are more easily attained than the longer ones.

20. Diplomas Completed

The rate of diploma completion is 34%. Investigation of this phenomena would be useful in determining the factors leading to successful completion and could be useful in future prevention of noncompletion.

TABLE VII

	19	20	21	22	23	24
Year	Certificate	Diploma	Trade	Bachelor	Master	Other
1980						
1981	2					
1982	2		1	2		
1983		1	1			
1984	2	1		1		
1985	6		3	3		
1986	5		1	2		
1987	2	1	3	3		
1988	8	2	3	3	1	
1989	8	2	1	1		
1990	6	2		2		1
1991	7	1	7			
1992	3		3			
1993	6	1	—	2	—	—
Total	57	11	23	19	1	1
	154	32	49	82	7	1
Rate %*	37%	34%	47%	23%	14%	

Table 7: Completion Rates

* number of subjects enrolled in each category = 100%

Note 1: In Progress = 35. This figure indicates the number of subjects currently engaged in the continuing pursuit of their education. This signifies a longer engagement as most of these students are enrolled in universities. This also greatly influences completion rates.

Note 2: Completed the academic term but not the academic requirements = 27. This figure indicates the number of subjects who spent the required time although they did not meet the academic standards, therefore they are not included in the completion figures.

21. Trades Completed

The Trades rate of completion (47%) refers only to the first level of apprenticeship. The completion of apprenticeship requirements vary from one trade to another. All candidates must complete experiential components and document their progress before qualifications can be fixed.

Association and Trade Guild membership is mandatory and standing within these organizations does influence further progress.

The incidence of full completion of apprenticeship to full Journeyman/Tradesman status is insufficient to draw any conclusions as their were only two (2) cases encountered. Further research would yield useful information for future measures of success.

22. Bachelor Degrees Completed

The number of graduates is nineteen (19) which represents 23% of completions since 1982. With six (6) completions expected in June 1994, the percentage would rise dramatically to 30%. This segment was the slowest growing and is now ungoing transformation as the attraction increases. Because of the four to five years needed to complete undergraduate degrees the growth rate is expected to be sporadic rather than constant in the years to come.

Because of the "number in progress" (35), this category can not be very conclusive at this time but with every completion the percentage will jump.

Correspondence on files indicated that subjects who where completing the time component of the academic programs but did not complete the requirements were officially notified and asked to withdraw by the institutions and are therefore not considered as completions. Failure to meet academic requirements was then documented in official correspondence as indicative of a lack of ability and/or lack of determination on the part of the subjects.

It would be interesting to investigate the institutions recruitment and selection processes as well as the grading procedures employed to determine these students' final marks as certain techniques can be detrimental for low achievers.

The highschool transcripts encountered (4) indicated borderline marks (low fifties) leading one to wonder about the suitability of the subjects to pursue university education at the time. Because of the lack of documentation in the other cases it becomes impossible to establish a strong argument relating the influence of the high school attainment on the future educational achievement.

23. Master Degree Completed

One (1) subject has achieved masters standing. The seemingly low representation in this category reflects the fact that six (6) of the seven (7) participants are still engaged. Again a segment which grows slowly but which seems promising and will lead to future doctoral pursuit.

24. Other Completion

This category applied to only one case of specific R.C.M.P. recruitment and training. The Education Authority was not financing the studies but only some of the excess costs incurred by the candidate. Therefore, this completion should not be considered as a 100% completion rate. The completion is however included in the overall participation and completion figures.

25. Month (Table 8 on page 92)

The academic year is set by the institutions and the semester system is the standard.

December has the highest incidence of premature academic termination. Perhaps further study in relation to this particular season (Christmas) and the return to families would reveal more insight in relation to the drop out frequency.

October and February have the second highest representation of dropouts. The fact that these happen to be midterm examination periods, may or may not be a determining factor. Further study could confirm this.

From the documentation on file termination in longer programs seems to have more to do with academic demands imposed by the institutions and extenuating circumstances than lack of determination on the subjects' part.

26. Years

The longest programs (3 and 4 year University programs) demonstrate the lowest incidence of dropouts. This could lead one to question the reasoning behind this.

TABLE VIII

25

Month	8 Months	10 Months	16 Months
September	2	5	1 (of 2nd yr.)
October	5	3	1 (of 2nd yr.)
November	2	5	1
December	9	10	1
January	2	5	1
February	5	2	1
March		2	
April		2	
May			1
June			2

26

Year	# Dropped Out
1	1
2	1
3	2
4	0

Table 8: Dropout Point and Frequency

* Dropout Point refers to the time of disengagement fromthe educational experience.

THEME 3 - PRESENT SITUATION OF THE SUBJECTS

The current circumstances of the subjects were investigated with the employers, consultants and the Patchawansis Band. This part of the research aimed at documenting the effect/benefit of education in terms of the relationship between knowledge and empowerment.

The figures of this third theme are based on the actual number of individuals (246) who lived the educational experience versus our previously used based of three hundred and twenty four (324) total subjects.

Because of the base differential and limitations on obtaining no more than 32% of employment data, it is recommended that future research emphasize detailing of these aspects.

27. Patchawansis Band (Table 9)

The Patchawansis Band is the local primary employer for Band members who have participated in the post-secondary education programs. Of seventy two (72) total Band employees, thirty seven (37) were participants from this study (51%).

These thirty seven (37) band employees represent forty nine percent (49%) of employed participants documented.

TABLE IX

27	28	29
Patchawansis Band	Other Employers	Self-Employed
37	Local: 18 Other: 18	3

Table 9: Employment (76)*

* 76 individuals could be documented as employed representing 32% of the 246 participants.

28. Other Employers

Local employers within the immediate surrounding community (including Government agencies) employ eighteen (18) individuals or 23.7%.

Employers in locations outside of the immediate surrounding community also employ eighteen (18) individuals or 23.7%.

At this time, there is no explanation for this even distribution of employment.

29. Self-Employed

Three (3) individuals or 3.9% are now self-employed and are now becoming a part of the "local employment" scene by providing employment for others.

30. Types of Employment (Table 10)

Once again, classifications were use to organize the data into categories similar to the ones used previously.

TABLE X

30	31
Types of Employment	# of Individuals
Unknown	6
Trades	5
Band Enterprises	4
Health & related	5
Administration	3
Education	20
Clerical/Secretarial	12
Technologies	6
Social Sciences/Related	12
Politics	3

Table 10: Nature of Employment (76)

31. Number of Individuals

Education is clearly the field which presently provides the most possibilities for local professional employment with four (4) establishments in expansion.

Clerical/Secretarial and Social Services (and related occupations) follow Education with a distant second in representation.

All other types of employment were generally equally distributed.

A surprise finding was the presence of politicians as a significant classification in its own right. The politicians span three (3) levels of government (Band, regional and federal). This poses interesting possibilities for investigation.

32. Incomplete Education vs. Completed Education (Table 11)

Incomplete Education vs. Completed Education illustrates that even partial educational experience seems to facilitate the obtainment of employment and increase employability especially at the local level.

TABLE XI

32.	Incomplete Education	$\frac{33}{76}$	$\frac{43}{76}$	Completed Education
33.	Unrelated Education	$\frac{25}{76}$	$\frac{51}{76}$	Related Education
34.	Cross over of points 32. and 33.			

Table 11: Education Relevant to Current Employment*

* Education relevant to current employment refers to the documented education in this study in relation to the current occupation/employment of the incumbent.

33. Unrelated Education vs. Related Education

Unrelated Education vs. Related Education refers to the relevancy of the previous training as it pertains to employment duties and responsibilities.

Due to the seemingly high incidence of relevancy, it could be presumed that the individuals are making correct educational selections for themselves.

34. Cross Over

Incomplete Education vs. Related Education reveals that there is a high incidence of uncompleted education

providing relevant information to the position in which the individuals finds themselves.

Complete Education vs. Unrelated Education has shown that many graduates find themselves in completely unrelated fields of expertise.

The documentation of the above has also revealed a high incidence of individuals with an uncompleted education having obtained employment for which specific training and education are required.

Given the high levels of university studies in progress this could be a source of future concerns. As university graduates search for employment, they will experience difficulty in obtaining the employment for which their trainings and qualifications have prepared them unless they are prepared to challenge the established employee placements or seek employment elsewhere.

Also, with the signed agreement (May 20, 1994) to accept all registered C-31s as regular Band members eligible to all services and benefits, the employment structure will again be challenged as more qualified people will compete for the existing employment.

Employing individuals with an uncompleted education might actually encourage the incidence of premature educational disengagement and might be undermining the efficacy of the education policy.

Documentation points out that there is an inconsistency between employment on and off the reserve. Off the reserve people are more likely to be underemployed as support staff.

35. Levels of Employment (Table 12)

Categories have been set up to illustrate the employment levels based on hierarchial distinctions.

Line and Staff refers to the functional occupation which does not include supervisory responsibilities but includes a sphere of influence which might influence other functions (i.e. teachers, Family Liaison Worker, Child and Welfare Intake Worker, etc.).

36. Number of Individuals

The largest sector of employment by far is the Line and Staff category. Support Personnel is the second highest employment category with half as many represented as Line and Staff.

Because the Unknown level of employment is so high (13), it could very much influence the validity of the pyramidal distribution.

TABLE XII

35 Levels	36 # of Individuals
A - Band Council	1
B - Upper Management	7
C - Supervisory	3
D - Line & Staff Employees	30
E - Support Personnel	17
Unknown Level	13
Subtotal	71
37. Politicians	2
38. Self-Employed	3
Total	76

Table 12: Structural Level of Employment

37. Politicians

One (1) participant is now involved in local politics as a Band Council Member.

Two (2) other participants are now involved outside the immediate political structure at the provincial and federal level.

This representation could be a very interesting topic of investigation for a researcher.

38. Self-Employed

Entrepreneurships represented (3) indicate the emergence of an independent and parallel structure which will primarily influence the trades.

SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS

To summarize the analysis, the profile of an average subject would be: a female, 28.25 years of age, single parent with 2 children and pregnant (2.5 ratio), living off the Reserve, having completed Grade 12 and continuing her education at A.V.C. Lesser Slave Lake in the U.C.E.P. program from which she is likely to drop out at Christmas time.

With only 5% of the Band Membership represented in post secondary education and an overall success rate of 34.4% the enormity of the challenge faced by the Education Authority in the next decade is staggering. At this time comparing mainstream society rates of participation and success is a futile exercise because no other minority group is separated from the "mainstream" designation. Most importantly, many trainings[3] are not considered or labelled as post-secondary

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[3]- A) trades accessed after Grade 10 are considered as industrial or mechanical apprenticeships not as post-secondary education. B) short term courses aiming at developping competency skills or employability are related to retraining manpower, employers' benefits and training programs, or self-development and personal interest.

education because the overall definition applies to education which follows the secondary education provided in each of the provincially established systems. Again, different definitions, legislations and applications prevail.

Within the current relationship with D.I.A.N.D., it becomes very difficult for the local Education Authority to formulate a clear mandate, and a vision of education which will carry the Patchawansis Band into the next decade and lead to self-determination. This undermines the global performance of the educational enterprise.

Neo-colonialism is well and alive. D.I.A.N.D. overviews the yearly budget and monthly disbursements and restricts the delivery of the services and implementation of policies that the Education Authority would deem appropriate and cost effective. Here the belief that the dominant sector of society has thrown seemingly incredible amounts of funding in return for very little result seems substantiated and the blaming the "colonized" for failing appears justified.

In fact, the research revealed how the Patchawansis Band members who did achieve and who had completed degrees were actually overcoming incredible odds.

In acquiring post-secondary education some win and some loose. Pulled in opposite directions, caught between

cultures, values and beliefs; First Nations people have to constantly be aware of the pressures of assimilation in order to retain a separate sense of identity which allows them to bridge the seemingly parallel realities which have existed since the Contact period.

CHAPTER 5

In attempting to present my understanding of the findings in an equitable way I was reminded that cross cultural research has to be presented with sensitivity. Therefore, there was a need to understand "Indian reality."

Researching this reality was done academically by native scholars Bull (1990) and Ing (1990). The works provide historical and social understanding of the effects of the Residential Schooling which was practiced until the later part of the sixties. This system of education has left a heritage of mistrust of education, pain, and alienation in many participants who had partial experience or hearsay experience of the system. This often predisposed participants negatively towards education; as adults they came to modify their expectations and attitudes in order to re-enter the educational system not as a mandatory obligation but as a personal choice.

Similarly, my discussion of the findings had to reflect my personal understanding <u>within</u> the context of the intercultural interaction. When I presented the numbers, it was easily interpreted as a negative return of the educational experience, however, they could also be interpreted as constructs used by our dominant culture and

applied to another one. Therefore, a practical conclusion would require that I modify my understanding and interpretations so that they are appropriate to the culture in which they find themselves and as such the findings will have a greater chance of achieving their goals of empowerment and education.

Intercultural sensitivity is frequently defined as a sensitivity to the importance of cultural differences, the point of view of people in other cultures, and the treatment of the data. Numbers represent a non-native preconceived notion of measurement of success. Consequently, my first interpretation of the data reflected a pessimistic view of the results which could point to procedures and deficiencies. However, having committed myself to resolving the biases surrounding the issues of Post-Secondary Native Education, I needed to pursue their interpretation within their cultural context and therefore, I discussed the findings with two Elders of the Treaty 8 area.

Teachings from the Elders

Conducting the interviews with Elders was very different from what might be expected. The interviewer is the listener. The protocol used to approach Elders determines the outcome of the interview. The first contact, will determine what the Elders intend to communicate about

the issue. Often this takes the format of a story telling or of a narrative which will present historical and current events juxtaposed.

I spent a weekend with Elders in August 1994. The Elders I talked with were known to me and I was known to them from previous encounters over the years. Regardless of the fact, I followed the protocol as a sign of respect. They declined the use of recordings and admonished me to: Listen. The question was: As an Elder, how do you interpret the policy of post-secondary education of Band Members?

These Elders spoke fluent English and the sessions were conducted in English with some Cree words used to illustrate the misunderstanding which occured due to the different interpretations given to words used in the Treaties and the culturally divergent meanings of certain concepts. I could clarify my understandings as needed. They were patient with me as I paraphrased their teachings. The sessions were interspaced with other activities; so I had time to write down information between sessions. I then created a composite of the sessions and went back to the Elders before to reporting these teachings here.

Another aspect of the week-end was that I could observe the application of the teachings to daily life and interactions between peoples. This was as revealing as the words. I could see what the Elders were talking about, not

only in others but also in myself as well. A form of gestalt therapy or healing was taking place.

As I wrote, I kept seeing a certain image of a large web. Each perception being a thread connecting to others to enlarge the pattern. There were unlimited possibilities unfolding in this process. As I reached new understanding, more light fell on others aspects I had partially glimpsed or mistakenly interpreted before. The circular pattern permitted advances, reflection, and re-evaluation which over time led to a sense of emergence of the whole. The whole was greater than the sum of its parts; and none of the parts could be understood without reference to the whole. Nine years of exploration congealed.

Treaty 8 was signed at Grouard (Alberta, Canada), north of what is the Sucker Creek Reserve, near the landing and the old R.C.M.P. station in 1899. Other adhesions were signed at Slave Lake, Desmarais, and Fort Chippewyan.

Treaty 8 was first about relationships between peoples: the Queen, the government, the Indians, or Indian - white relationships and secondly, the Treaty was to provide Indian people with the opportunities for a change of life from nomadic hunting and gatherering to a sedentary life as farmers. The negociations over the monetary allowances to be paid as compensation of the loss of the way of life (hunting, fishing and trapping) delayed the signing of the

Treaty by Chief Mostoos. Chief Kinosayoo and Moostoos also debated over the right to education and the government agents guaranteed this would be provided. At the time the missionaries were the teachers and the Indians were told they could choose their education according to their religion in government supported schools. However, the extent and nature of the education was not specified under the Treaty. Therefore, the understanding is generally referred to as "learning the ways of the white man." This interpretation could then be farming, industry, or today's academic pursuits. The beliefs that education is a Treaty Right doesn't limit the period of education in their eyes: a person should be able to learn as long as he/she wants if they desire to learn more of the white man's ways.

The ideals of First Nations peoples varies from the ethics of the dominant society. I will relate as best I can these standards according to my understandings of what my Elders have explained and with the assistance of **Dancing with a Ghost** (Ross, 1992) which evolved from a simmilar experience.

Respect, the Elders said, is the foundation to all interactions and relationships and means respect for the Creator, all things created, all people, and for yourself. From respect comes the understanding of what is "right and wrong" and of how all actions and interactions are to be

conducted. Understanding and practicing this creed results in obtaining a "good life": a contented and harmonious life. Therefore, Elders do not speak of punishment for past mistakes and misdeeds but focus upon "making things right" for the future.

Labels applied to individuals by educational institutions counteract this belief and could be more harmful than expected. So is the penalty clause in case of termination which creates more disharmony within the individual instead of fostering the greatness within. The punitive emphasis hampers self-fulfilment and undermines respect including respect for oneself as it serves to remind one of failure.

Furthermore, our dominant society is obsessed with the measurable notion of individual goal attainment and success. According to the Elders **success** is to be measured in terms of the attainment of the attitude of respect as manifested in the context of a person's acts. This aspect is difficult to define: the attitude of respect seems to me to be the result of the process of self-awareness and mastery which leads one to honour the individual gift of life given by the Creator and by achieving one's greatest potential for the moment. This is not a static achievement: it is a constantly evolving and transforming process of discovery which includes spiritual, mental, and emotional growth

reflected in observable physical manifestations called actions.

The ethic of non-interference (Ross, 1992:12) is probably the oldest and most pervasive of all the ethics by which native people live. It is not well defined and to the outsiders this is easily misinterpreted as a lack of caring, indifference and non-involvement, but it is not. It essentially means that Native people refrain from impinging on a person's rights, privileges, or free will. Advice if sought is given as a possibility "you could do this" as apposed to "you do this or have to do that." The choice is always left to the individual. Advice giving is always improper and even when asked for the advisor will prefer to resort to story telling instead of giving direct advice.

This ethic applied to parenting, teaching, and social aspects contrasts with the non-native emphasis on "correcting" through direct interference such as the punishment, or in the application of selection criteria, counselling, and any other types of procedures employed in the educational process.

Ross elaborates that behind this rule against advice-giving appears another rule requiring that **no one be made to feel inferior to another (1992: 23-24)**: it would be wrong to act as if you are superior in any fashion and it would be wrong to make anyone feel inadequate by embarrassing others

to show them up. Therefore, confrontations and asking leading questions to which people can answer by yes or no are avoided or the other is allowed to "save face" by giving the expected answer.

The Elders did not make advice giving and avoiding one upmanship separate values. They are integral expressions of respect which allows an individual the space to grow and change.

Stoicism defined in Cree as "Kiam" (...be patient... silent...everything passes), can be interpreted as the presence of an emotional void by outsiders. Freire (1985) warns that when social or cultural violence has been extreme or of long duration, individual emotional numbness in the oppressed can be quite common especially when they are in an alien environment. People can preserve their mental and cultural equilibrium by distancing or disassociating from the events when they feel stressed or endangered, and Ross (1992) that this is also relevant in front of authority figures who might control access to future opportunities or resources. There is more to it than controlling anger or grief. This stoicism applies to all excessive feelings: too much of anything creates imbalance and is disruptive of inner peace and harmony.

This response mechanism could very well be what the official correspondance (on files) from the educational

institutions called the "lack of commitment, undetermined goals, or indolence" for which they terminated the students.

I did encounter two incidences contradicting this principle. Firstly, a copy of a letter of complaint to the Human Rights Commission by someone who had been denied extension of funding after running out of time. And secondly, a letter of appeal for re-instatement of funding after a student terminated her educational participation following a charge of sexual and racial discrimination against her teacher. These could be interpreted as indication that some individuals are now using society's policies to protect themselves instead of remaining silent.

Encouragement, pride and support is shown traditionally by encouraging the other person to <u>continue</u> with his/her contribution or effort rather than by compliments. Thereby inviting students to continue their educational experience will be culturally appropriate as they engage in post-secondary education and enter graduate studies in greater numbers.

There is also an expectation of excellence from a culture based on survival where there was often no second chance. The great number of people who do not re-enter education after failure might be indicative of the viability of this attitude.

The notion of appropriate timing ("the time is right") is related to the belief that life is a process (not to be rushed or forced) of slow and careful self-fulfilment and self-realization which continues until death. Lifelong learning is a way of life. One duties are to assist others on their paths, to be patient even when their acts reflect a lack of maturity and to avoid discouraging people by reducing their respect and faith in themselves.

The reluctance to provide documentation (transcripts and such) might be an actual expression of this notion as it would leave one open to judgement.

The principle that "time be right" doesn't relate only to physical preparation but to the internal preparation needed to be receptive both emotionally and spiritually to the course of action chosen if the task can be performed successfully and respectfully.

The average age of the participants indicates a greater level of maturity. Also the rate of success is more prevalent in older students. University graduates and post-graduates are older than the average. The students who enter these and four year programs have greater rates of completion than other programs. Could this be a reflection of the "time is right for them" as they have resolved personal issues?

Not all Native people either understand or have chosen to live within this perspective especially the young among which the invasion of our individualistic and materialistic culture remains to be seen as a cultural genocide.

There is a different hierarchy of social values at work. Traditionally, **leadership** is not about power: it is about caring. Anyone who helps others and dedicates himself/herself to helping others instead of simply advancing personal interest, demonstrates a commitment to the ideals of harmony and inter-connectivity. Leadership is not measured by the degree to which one subdues but by the degree to which one <u>serves</u>. One Elder points out: " In the old days, the Chiefs did not walk ahead of the people, the scouts did to make sure the way was safe. The Chief stayed with the people to encourage them and make sure no one was left behind." Further on she says: "Our chiefs were not wealthy before (the Treaties)... they shared with everyone who needed it their goods and sometimes they had to do without so that others did not have to... They were not greedy."

Education is not necessarily an indication of success or of leadership: it is the degree of understanding and the acts which demonstrate that understanding which are the real indicators. The collective supersedes the individual, however it cannot be sustained by weak ones, so the

development of personal power of which education is a part is essential in developing the new brand of warriors and leaders.

With education comes **fears**. As Elders watch more and more of their people leaving to live in towns and cities they fear the unravelling of the social fabric of their society. They fear the loss of this vision of Indian Life. They fear for the students but mostly for their children which grow up away from family members, the land and the language which will predispose them to greater assimilation.

Individual and Collective Challenges

Community survival is jeopardized. Many who have left have not returned. It might be seen as a betrayal of the past and of the people who lived it. This might be an impoverishing and alienating process for the individuals who can find themselves empty, removed, and cut off culturally and socially for the first time.

This debate is prevalent in remote reserves where the luxury of selective educational involvement doesn't exist. To gain an education one has to leave home completely, often for very long periods of time. So underlying the choice of educational participation is the troubling question of whether the person who goes away will ever come back to the

family, the community and to traditional ways of life. The sense of family obligation in Native communities means that moving away can imply extreme loneliness and also guilt which accompanies the sheer sense of loss. This might explain why there is such a strong demand for local offerings of post-secondary education.

When I first approached the Education Authority I was told by an employee: "I'm one of the few who have returned." During the research I encountered others who have returned. After they had secured good jobs, homes, and funds in the city, had packed it in and gone home. Westerners have difficulty grasping why one would work so hard to give it up to go back to poorer housing, schooling, medical care and the possibility of underemployment or even unemployment. We attribute such moves often to loneliness, to mid-life crisis, to the inability to "make it" in the real world or worse still to a lack of a sense of responsibility or independence. What we fail to see is that it is exactly the native sense of responsibility which pushes them to return. They have a vision to sustain them. They have to get reacquainted with their families and community, walking slowly and treading softly especially in communities where factions exist and where bureaucrats and politicians exercise external pressures. They also deserve encouragement and support for they cannot act with the same

expediency that they might have demonstrated in the urban setting. Their vigour cannot be be unleashed otherwise it will be browbeaten.

Often, many who do return are so changed in many ways that their families and communities have a hard time accepting them. The derogatory term frequently used by community and Band members alike to describe Native individuals who have become westernized is "Apple...red on the outside, white on the inside." To succeed in our schools and jobs they have had to adopt many of our self-assertive and interventionist ways, our impatience, our preoccupation with the clock and deadlines, and our methods of decision making from the top down which all contradict their Native ethics. As a result they are often viewed with suspicion when they return to get involved in tribal life. They can fall in a no man's land, alternating periods of action in community involvement which is frequently resented, and resulting in bitter retreat.

Political Power and Responsibilities

Finally, most people are not aware of the responsibilities borne by each Chief and Council, responsibilities which would not be imposed on any municipal government in our towns and cities. The absence of any tax base requires that the Chief and Council spend a major

portion of the year lobbying the provincial and federal governments for necessary funds to maintain services. This task is not lessened by the bureaucrats who can be frustrating and hindering rather than helpful.

The amount of administrative and other talent it takes to apply for, create, and maintain essential services in a reserve is staggering. The Band often acts as a general contractor. Council also chooses and allocated housing among Band members. When housing is in short supply people forced to stay with their families hold the Council to blame. The administration of welfare, supervision of education, hiring and firing of teachers, development of curricula, purchase of supplies and maintenance of school buildings also fall within their jurisdiction. Also they supervise mental health workers, community health representatives, family service members, youth workers, probation aides, drug and alcohol addiction counsellors, and supervised court ordered community service work. They also have to invest the Band's funds wisely for the development of the resources.

The same dedicated people often must be the school board, the welfare officers, the housing authority, the education authority, the development officers and the providers of virtually all jobs. This often leads to accusation of nepotism. It is, therefore, clear that

survival and progress require that people remain or return to the Reserve for their contributions are essential to the tribal attainment of self-determination.

Knowledge and Power Relationship in the Socio-Economic Life of this Northern Community

In the views of the community members I talked to, the Patchawansis Band is out for control of all the systems within the community; education, health, development and implementation. Even transient people (predominantly white) view Patchawansis members' growing expertise, increasing vocal and participating presence as threatening to the old social order. Educated band members are perceived as making rapid inroads within the Band's political structure and in a slower fashion within the community as the employment structure revealed previously.

Tensions exist socially, economically, politically and racially between the various groups as well as within groups as exemplified with the C-31's which are still an issue within the Patchawansis Band membership.

External views revealed a perception of the development theory application which contrast the personal search for individual power. Failure is "blamed" on the natives who failed to adapt to the dominant standards and criteria. This perspective is reinforced with numbers and statistics

showing the amount of funds "invested" in native education. However, is it really an investment? This would mean there is expectation of returns, or the endeavour is doomed.

What are the returns expected? Employment primarily, mobility and through these integration by choice into the society by participation in the work force which allows purchasing power of items deemed to represent the standards of civilization in our society: mostly goods, equipment, practices and customs which the dominant segment of our society values over traditional and rural ones.

A meaning of development appropriate to the Band would mean local employment, improved health and standards of living while respecting the cultural values and environment. This requires education and the right to self-determination. Despite numerous indicators of progress there is still considerable dissatisfaction with the education system based on perceived insufficiencies in the resources the federal government is allocating to Indian Education. The community cite as evidence the Indian students success rate, the student alienation reflected in early withdrawals and disparity in provincial and federal standards as reasons for increasing student support services. These same arguments are used by representatives from D.I.A.N.D. to justify their restrictions in the same services.

A major impediment to progress in the development of native post-secondary education has been the tribal inability to agree on guiding principles and operational guidelines which would explicitly describe the scope of the policy and development of the infrastructure required to facilitate the transition from federal to band control. Uncertain management impedes the achievement of objectives and the definition of mandates, roles and responsibilities. As long as these conditions remain the federal government through D.I.A.N.D. will continue to extent a paternalistic and overbearing hand.

What is interesting here is the collision of social contexts. Each cultural group believed the other is intentionally disrespectful and controlling. Each group could see the other only through its own rules and interpret the behaviours of others from within their own perspective.

Acts are not merely acts. They are also a signal of attitude which is often culturally specific. Acts are seen but their signal-context is "interpreted." Unless we understand what particular acts mean to the other, we will continue to ascribe motivations and state of mind which could be well off the mark and to misread each other.

This stage provided me with an understanding of the negative perceptions surrounding the native education issue. It is a public relations issue. The D.I.A.N.D. is the

instrument of the Federal government: a paternalistic system of colonialism from the 19th century when Indians were made wards of the state. Neo-colonialism still thrives in the 20th century.

It was made clear during interviews that native post-secondary education is perceived by the insiders as a social issue, while the outsiders consider it as a political one. Political implies "power". Lack of knowledge is equated with a lack of power to act. Therefore, the knowledge and power relationship seems implied in the socio-economic life of this northern community.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that First Nations peoples need to continue the search for information which will enable them to change and shape their destiny. I would conclude that the first step towards change is a common understanding and effort which would magnetize the collectivity. Freire (1985) has advocated as a communion, a transcendence of individualities between the peoples who want change to occur. The new warriors are here. Divided they cannot reverse the situation as they leave themselves open to individual attacks. United and focused they can increased the impact of their efforts and force change to occur so that "...they will emerge with their hand held forward to

grasp the place in society that is rightfully theirs" (Late Chief Dan George).

From this research, I would suggest the following topics for further investigation:

1- What are the selection criteria and procedures used by institutions in the admittance of First Nations students to post-secondary programs?

2- What criteria influence the students' selection of programs and institutions?

3- What are the effects of various grading procedures on aboriginal students?

4- What factors and practices contribute to the educational success of band members?

5- What factors and practices lead to non-completion of post-secondary education?

6- What personal experiences motivate the pursuit of post-secondary education?

7- What discourages the high school students from directly entering post-secondary education programs?

8- In term of leadership, of what importance is a post-secondary education?

9- How do parental academic pursuits affect their children's?

10- Culturally, what are the effects of post-secondary education?

11- How are conjugal relationships affected by participation in post-secondary programs?

12- To what degree are secondary scores indicative of post-secondary achievement?

13- What characteristics differentiate university students from other participants in post-secondary programs?

14- What would case studies of the politicians reveal?

15- What are the nature and degree of obligation perceived by band members who elect to exercise their right to a post-secondary education?

16- What findings would result from a survey of the post-secondary participants who have not returned to the community?

Of course, I would also suggest that certain measures be implemented to improve the current services. Namely, the job description of the educational counsellor requires specific skills and training, therefore encouraging the incumbent to pursue appropriate trainings would seem reasonable.

Improving communication procedures between educational institutions and the Education Authority would result in more effective and detailed documentation of subjects' suitability and progress in their individual field of study.

To increase participation of Band members in post-secondary education there might be a need to increase the

amount of information given to junior and high school students about the nature, extent, and regulations pertaining to the education funding available to them. This could also mean communication, coordination, and support between the education counsellors from the local schools and institutions.

Furthermore, to encourage and maximize population representation, outreach information sessions could be delivered in remote areas. This could dispell the allegations of favoritism which are currently voiced.

It is time the gulf between our cultures be acknowledged, explored, bridged where possible and accommodated where not. Neither group is going to disappear. Our mutual cultural psyches must be deflated so that self-righteousness be exorcised from the current power and knowledge scenario. We must all deal with unresolved feelings of grief, anger, and guilt before we can face the future as our common challenge. It is essential that we understand each other if we are to make choices for the future based on accurate perceptions of the separate realities. Perhaps then we can begin to leave the patterns of the past behind.

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APPENDIX I

PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT

1. I followed the University of Alberta Research Ethics directives and limitations,
2. respected the confidentiality of documents,
3. respected the anonymity of subjects,
4. communicated and reported progress to the Patchawansis Band on a monthly basis,
5. provided a complete copy of Thesis and research findings to the Patchawansis Band for their use,
6. verbally presented the findings to the Chief and Council, or as they request it after the completion of the Thesis.

APPENDIX II

REQUIREMENTS FROM THE PATCHAWANSIS BAND

1. project approval (done Jan. 94)
2. assignment of a contact person to consult with on an ongoing basis and guidance during the whole project, (done Jan. 94)
3. access to official documents, files, correspondence, reports, minutes of meetings, policy changes, procedures and selection criteria, overall development and self-government plans/goals. (April-May 94)
4. permission to photocopy parts or full documents relevant to further analysis of results (while preserving anonymity and confidentiality)
5. work space preferably where the data is kept so there is no need to remove files or documents, (unavailable, April 94) or assistance in making alternative arrangements.
6. privacy while working to ensure confidentiality of files
7. agreement to let me publish findings for future academic purposes, while I would respect restrictions of confidentiality and anonymity as agreed.

APPENDIX III

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Hamlet Reserve	1990 Official Population 1,109 1993 Official Population 1,204
Water	Supply: Lake Patchawansis Distribution: Complete Treatment: Complete
Sewer	Collection: Piped system Disposal: Aerated lagoons
Waste	Collection: Scheduled pick up Disposal: Open pit
Electricity	Three phase - system
Transportation	Main Access: Highway ** (paved) Alternate Access: Highway ** (gravel) Internal Roads: Gravel (limited paving) Bus Service: None (from Slave Lake only) Truck/freight: Regular delivery service Air Service: No regular service Airstrip: Paved and lighted Rail: Off-line Grain Elevators: None
Health Services	Hospital: 29 acute care beds (no surgery) Nursing Home: Nearest at Athabasca Ground Ambulance: Resident service Medical Doctors: 2 resident doctors Community Health Nurses: Office Dentists: Visiting Optometrists: Visiting Mental Health Services: Resident counsellors and crisis intervention Band Health Services: Limited
Education	Public Schools: 2 schools; 12 grades Separate Schools: 1 Other Institutions: A.V.C. Lesser Slave Lake Library: Nearest at Slave Lake

Public Housing	Seniors Lodges: None Seniors Self-contained Units: 12 units Community Housing: None
Police Protection	R.C.M.P. Detachment
Fire Protection	Hamlet: 17 volunteer and 3 trucks
Recreation	Gymnasiums: 2 Sports Fields: 1 Ball Diamonds: 4 Community Halls: 2 Arena: 1
Tourism	Hotels/Motels: 1 Parks: Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park and campground Restaurants: 2
Financial	Banks: outlet only
Communication	Radio: CKYL (Peace River) and Edmonton based stations Television: Microwave rebroadcast Local Papers: None Regional Papers: "Slave Lake Lakeside Leader"
Local Government	Represented at ID Treaty 8 - Band Council
Government Offices	Provincial: Career Development & Employment Correctional Services: Visiting Probation, Court & Legal Social Services: Visiting Child Welfare & Family Support N.N.A.D.A.P. Federal: Post Office
Resources	Oil and gas Forestry Tourism
Retail Services:	Stores (chain): 3 Private Enterprises: 2 Band Enterprises: 1 Service Stations: 4

Sources: I.D. #**, 1990
Patchawansis Band Chief and Council Report (1993)
Researcher's Observations 1994.

APPENDIX IV

POST SECONDARY STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

1. UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE ENTRANCE PREPARATION PROGRAM (U.C.E.P.) or Grade 12 Equivalent.

One school year	10 months
Up to a total =	10 months

2. LEVEL I - Certificate or Diploma

2 School Years x 8 months =	16 months
1 Additional Year x 8 months	8 months
Total Eligible Months =	24 months

3. LEVEL II - Undergraduate Degree

4 years x 8 months =	32 months
1 Additional year x 8 months	8 months
Total Eligible Months =	40 months

4. LEVEL III - Graduate/Professional Degree

a) Masters Degree

2 Years x 8 months	16 months
Total Eligible Months	16 months

b) PH.D. Degree

2 Years x 8 months	16 months
Total Eligible Months =	16 months

*Only one additional year of support for <u>either</u> program in Level III

*Usually sixteen months support <u>or</u> actual/official length of program as defined by the institution.

APPENDIX V

MAXIMUM LEVELS OF ASSISTANCE FOR LIVING EXPENSES

		Monthly	HRA*
(a)	Single student living with employed parent	$290	$290
(b)	Single student	$675	$675
(c)	Married student:		
	with employed spouse	$675	$675
	with 1 dependent	$850	$850
	with 2 dependents	$1,030	$1,030
	with 3 dependents	$1,205	$1,205
	and $50 for each additional		
(d)	Married student:		
	with dependent spouse	$895	$895
	and 1 additional dependent	$1,045	$1,045
	and 2 additional dependents	$1,205	$1,305
	and 3 additional dependents	$1,355	$1,505
	and $50 for each additional		
(e)	Single parent:		
	with 1 dependent	$1,045	$1,045
	with 2 dependents	$1,205	$1,305
	with 3 dependents	$1,355	$1,505
	and $50 for each additional		

* HRA = High Rental Area

Only married students with dependent spouse and two or more dependents and single parents with two or more dependents, who place of study is located in a high rental area, are eligible for the Maximum Monthly Allowance for High Rental Areas. The high rental areas will be identified and revised annually by the Department using the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's rental survey.

These rates were set by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs in their New Post Secondary Student Support Program of 1989. They are not indexed to inflation rates.

APPENDIX VI

LIST OF INSTITUTIONS ATTENDED**	ATTENDANCE
Acamdemy of Learning	2
Alberta Career College	1
Alberta College	15
Alberta Distance Learning Centre	1
Angler's Taxidermy Ltd.	1
Athabasca University	3
A.V.C. Edmonton	3
A.V.C. Lesser Slave Lake - Grouard	21
A.V.C. Lac La Biche	20
A.V.C. Lesser Slave Lake - Slave Lake	22
Bara Academy of Business Science Ltd.	1
Blue Quills College	3
Cameron Driver Education	5
Canadian Native Bible College	2
Career Path Services Ltd.	1
Cariboo College*	1
Computer College (P.A. Sask.)*	1
Computer Development Institute*	1
Concordia College	9
DeVry Institute of Technology	1
Edmonton Secretarial College	1
Emn'Owkin Centre*	1
Fairview College	4
Grant McEwan Community College	16
Grande Prairie Beauty College	1
Grande Prairie Regional College	25
I.C.S. Canada Ltd. (correspondence)*	4
John Casablanca Modeling Agency	1
Key-way-tin Bible Institute*	1
Keyano College	33
Kisemanito Centre	1
L.A. School Of Hairdressing	1
Lakelands College	4
Lethbridge Community College	4
Life Skill Training Centre	2
Malespina College*	1
Marvel College	1
Medicine Hat College	2
Mount Royal College	2
Muskachees College	1
N.A.I.T.	13
N.R.I. (Washington, D.C.)*	1
Native Bible College*	1
Nechi Institute	3
North Island College*	1
Northern Lights College*	1

Okanagan School of Hairdressing*	1
Old Masters Institute of Photography*	1
Peace Air Flight School	1
Pentecostal Sub-Artic Training College*	1
Petroleum Industrial Training Service (P.I.T.S.)	4
Port Alberni Hair Dressing School*	1
R.C.M.P. Academy*	1
Red Deer College	2
Round Lake Addiction Training Centre*	1
Royal Alexandra School of Nursing	2
S.A.I.T.	3
Saskatchewan Indian Federated College*	2
Simon Fraser University	1
Sunrise Project	37
University of Alberta	28
University of British Columbia*	1
University of Calgary	6
University of Lethbridge	3
University of Saskatchewan*	2
University of Victoria*	3
Yellowhead Tribal Council Education	2

* Out of Province
** Multiple entries